Problems of Communism

Essay-Reviews

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William C. Bodie

JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1990

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JANUARY-FEBRUARY 1990 VOL XXXIX

Problems of Communism (ISSN 0032-941x) is a bimonthly publication providing analyses and significant information about the contemporary affairs of the Soviet Union, China, and comparable states and political movements. Views of contributors, as well as geographic boundaries and names, do not necessarily reflect the policies of the United States Government.

On all editorial matters, communications should be addressed to: The Editors, *Problems of Communism,* US Information Agency, United States of America, 301 4th Street SW, Washington, DC, 20547, USA. Telephone (202) 485-2230.

On subscriptions, communications should be addressed to: The Superintendent of Documents, US Government Printing Office, Washington, DC, 20402, USA, preferably using the subscription form provided at the back of this issue. Outside the United States, please address inquiries to the Public Affairs Section, Embassy of the United States of America.

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An annual index for *Problems of Communism* appears in the November-December issue (No. 6) of each year except in the case of the first three volumes, which are covered in a combined index in the November-December issue (No. 6) of Vol. III. Material from the journal is also indexed in *ABC POL SCI, Bibliographie Internationale des Sciences Sociales (all Sections), Current Contents, Economic Abstracts, Historical Abstracts, Index to US Government Periodicals, International Political Science Abstracts, Public Affairs Information Service, Social Sciences Citation Index, Social Sciences Index, Strategic Studies Reference Guide,* and *United States Political Science Documents.*

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COVER: First Vice-President Anatoliy Luk'yanov and President Mikhail Gorbachev at the USSR Supreme Soviet in September 1989. Photo by Pictorial Parade.

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IN THIS ISSUE OF

Problems of Communism

Articles

Gorbachev's Dual Role

Elizabeth Teague and Dawn Mann

Faced by an intractable Communist Party apparatus, General Secretary Mikhail Gorbachev decided to breathe life into the soviets as an alternative institution of government. The USSR Supreme Soviet, of which Gorbachev was elected chairman, has begun to act like a genuine parliament instead of a rubber stamp for decisions of the CPSU Central Committee. However, Gorbachev has apparently felt constrained by the newly assertive legislature. At the February 1990 Central Committee plenum, he proposed the creation of a presidency with strong executive powers independent of the Supreme Soviet.

First Party Secretaries: An Endangered Soviet Species?

Vladimir Brovkin

Communist Party secretaries in the oblasts and districts of the USSR constitute the most important source of resistance to Mikhail Gorbachev's program of *perestroyka*. These *apparatchiki* blame the reform efforts for threatening the authority of the party, bringing about economic chaos, and calling into question the credibility of Marxism-Leninism. To repair the damage, the party secretaries call for halting the arbitrary rule of the central party institutions over the party as a whole, safeguarding Marxist-Leninist ideology, and preserving the party's leading role in society. Concurrently, they are seeking to establish a role for themselves in the new political era by identifying with nationalist sentiments and by attempting to lead a workers' opposition to *perestroyka*. The party secretaries are unlikely to succeed in such efforts; as a political species, they face certain extinction in the years ahead.

Leadership by "Lines": China's Unresolved Succession

Ian Wilson and You Ji

The events of Tiananmen Square 1989 underlined yet again the inability of the Chinese political system to devise procedures for an orderly leadership succession. This inability has deep roots in the Chinese Communist Party's practice of leadership by "lines," whereby the top leadership is divided into those of the "first line," who manage the day-to-day work of the party, and the "second line" leaders who determine the major issues of strategy and policy. Although Deng Xiaoping and other senior leaders have withdrawn to the second line of responsibility, they have not been willing to allow the first line leaders to develop the independent power base and sufficient persona that would guarantee their survival once the second-line leaders die or withdraw their support. In this setting, the political role of the People's Liberation Army is seen to be increasing, although it does not yet threaten to take over leadership of the country.

Portuguese Communism Since 1976: Limited Decline

Carlos Gaspar

In the aftermath of the unsuccessful attempt by the Portuguese Communist Party to seize power in Lisbon in 1974–75, the party resorted to a strategy of both working within Portugal's political system and preserving its revolutionary orthodoxy. This strategy has allowed the party to keep the allegiance of its members and to do relatively well at the polls. In the late 1980's, however, Álvaro Cunhal, the party's long-time General Secretary, was faced with several problems—succession, "new thinking" in Moscow, and internal dissent against the party's orthodoxy prompted by the durability of pluralist democracy in Portugal. These factors combined into a general crisis for the party. Although Cunhal has contained the crisis for now, mastering it may well be beyond his capacity.

(Abstracts continued on reverse side)

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Notes

Agricultural Price Reform in Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland

Nancy J. Cochrane

By the end of 1989, incomplete reform of Poland's agricultural pricing mechanisms had led to high inflation, shortages, declining productivity, and monumental waste. These problems reflected the continued dominance of the state purchasing and retail monopolies, a severe subsidy-wage-price spiral, the lack of capital markets to finance new private firms, and the poor condition of the economic infrastructure. The economic program that took effect on January 1, 1990, is designed to redress these problems, although in the short run it exacerbated inflation and shortages. The Polish case may illustrate the pitfalls that await other East European countries which attempt agricultural price reform in the absence of capital markets, concerted efforts to break up state monopolies, and temporary wage controls to limit inflation.

The "Abalkanization" of Soviet Economic Reform

Boris Rumer

A new catchword has recently appeared in the vocabulary of Moscow political pundits—"Abalkanization" (*abalkanizatsiya)* of the economic reforms. The term derives from the name of Academician Leonid Abalkin, director of the Soviet Institute of Economics, who in July 1989 was appointed chairman of the commission on economic reform and deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. By reputation an advocate of radical economic reforms, Abalkin appears to go along with the political leadership in favoring a temporary retreat to command-economy methods to combat serious inflation, the budget deficit, and other financial and production problems before moving on the creation of a market economy in the Soviet Union.

Economic Conversion in the USSR: Its Role in *Perestroyka*

William H. Kincade and T. Keith Thomson

In the late 1980's, the Soviet government moved to convert an increasing number of military industrial facilities to production for civilian needs. Reformers argue that the conversion effort will promote a range of economic goals: saturating the market with consumer goods, thereby soaking up unspent rubles and easing inflation; modernizing industry; meeting social needs; and facilitating price reform, joint ventures, and the economy's entry into the world market. However, conversion will require large sums of money, it has proved difficult to "change the product mix" of military industries, and complaints have been aired about the quality of civilian goods produced in the military-industrial sector.

Essay-Reviews

Soviet Propaganda and Active Measures

James P. Nichol

The decade of the 1980's saw renewed Western scholarly and official interest in Soviet propaganda and active measures as integral components of Soviet foreign policy. A major issue is the role of these activities in the era of "new political thinking." It is perhaps "not by accident" that many of the propaganda themes promulgated by Mikhail Gorbachev echo ones developed by Comintern official Willi Munzenberg in the 1920's—an earlier period in which the Soviet Union pulled back from foreign exposure to buy time for economic development at home.

The Secret Police and Soviet Politics

William C. Bodie

For many years, the Soviet secret police, in one acronymic guise or another, has been the Banquo's ghost of Western Sovietology, a disturbing apparition that could be neither explained nor ignored by analysts of Soviet politics. If the KGB (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti*—Committee for State Security) may be seen as an ally of Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts at *perestroyka,* if not its inspiration, the subject merits the increased attention that Western scholars have been according it.

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Gorbachev's Dual Role

Elizabeth Teague and Dawn Mann

Mikhail Gorbachev is both general secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and chairman of the Supreme Soviet. In five years as party leader, he has demonstrated superb skill in gaining acceptance of his reform program. But Gorbachev apparently found the powers of the office of general secretary insufficient to achieve his goals, for in 1988, he assumed the (then) largely symbolic position of chairman of the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet.

In 1989, the powers of the Soviet presidency were considerably strengthened as a result of constitutional amendments adopted in late 1988. A new Congress of People's Deputies, which elected the standing parliament—the USSR Supreme Soviet—also elected Gorbachev to the new, more powerful position of chairman of the Supreme Soviet.[1] But even this new position proved inadequate for Gorbachev. In February 1990, the CPSU Central Committee approved Gorbachev's proposals regarding the creation of a presidency with even stronger powers. Gorbachev's adviser, Vadim Zagladin, said the new system would be "similar to the French and US systems, with changes to suit the Soviet situation."[2]

By increasing the power of the presidency—his most radical move to date—Gorbachev is turning away from the Communist Party as the sole ruling institution. While Gorbachev's power within the party is unsurpassed, the CPSU has lost control over its own ranks and over the sprawling government bureaucracies, and thus has become unable to rule the country by the means it has customarily employed. Although the party retains its control over the Soviet Union's coercive apparatus, resorting to coercion would in all likelihood destroy completely the little authority and legitimacy that the party still retains.

Gorbachev has therefore turned to an institution whose Leninist origins are impeccable but whose authority has to date remained essentially untested—the soviets. It is through the soviets that Gorbachev hopes to implement his policies—policies that he is advancing in the name of the party—and thereby restore legitimacy and authority to the CPSU as well as maintain his own power and political authority.

Gorbachev is implementing this strategy, which amounts to a profound reform of the political system, in his dual role as both party leader and head of state. Combined with the powers of the CPSU general secretary, the powers of the presidency are intended to enhance Gorbachev's ability to pursue his reform program. In addition, the presidency gives Gorbachev greater personal security by providing him with an institutional power base outside the party. Gorbachev's situation in this respect compares favorably with that of Nikita Khrushchev. Although he took the precaution of having himself appointed chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers while serving as party leader, Khrushchev did not build up the Council of Ministers' authority at the expense of the party. When he made the fatal error of antagonizing the party apparatus, Khrushchev was unceremoniously ousted by the Central Committee

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[1]The chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet is described in the USSR constitution, as amended in 1988, as "the highest official of the Soviet state" (*Pravda* [Moscow], Dec. 3, 1988). This is the post assumed by Gorbachev in May 1989. Although it is not officially recognized in the USSR as equivalent to that of "president" in other systems, the official Soviet news agency, TASS, refers to Gorbachev in its English-language dispatches as "president" of the USSR. *Faute de mieux*, the term "president" is used in the present article.

[2]*La Repubblica* (Rome), Feb. 10, 1990.

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from his party and government posts in October 1964.[3]

Gorbachev, whose restructuring of the party threatens to go much further than Khrushchev's, seems to have had his predecessor's fate in mind when crafting the new post of president. Thus, under the constitution as amended in 1988, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet is chosen by the Congress of People's Deputies from among its own members. On the face of it, the Central Committee cannot remove Gorbachev from this post; that right rests with the Congress. Conversely, the Congress cannot remove the general secretary from his party position. However, this arrangement contains loopholes.[4] In particular, under the current constitutional provisions, the Central Committee could force Gorbachev's resignation as Supreme Soviet chairman by recalling him as a representative of the CPSU in the Congress of People's Deputies.[5] Clearly, if such a situation arose, a constitutional crisis would ensue. Soviet observers have nonetheless suggested that Gorbachev's vulnerability on this score may have held him back from implementing radical economic reforms.[6]

The proposals regarding the post of president that Gorbachev made at the February 1990 Central Committee plenum should, if implemented, close the loophole because the president would in the future (that is, probably in 1994), be elected by popular vote. This method of election would enhance the position's authority and afford its holder greater protection against a palace coup.

Gorbachev's Presidency

Gorbachev became chairman of the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in September 1988. His assumption of this post continued a practice that began in 1977, when Leonid Brezhnev took over the office of chairman in addition to that of party leader. (Prior to 1977, the post was usually occupied by relatively insignificant members of the Kremlin leadership; Lenin, Stalin, and Khrushchev never held it.) The original attraction for Brezhnev seemed to be that the post afforded him the gratification of receiving the honors due a head of state when he traveled abroad on official visits. But once Brezhnev occupied this post in addition to that of general secretary, the chairmanship assumed new significance. Thereafter, attainment of this office came to be seen as symbolic of the predominance of the general secretary over his Politburo colleagues. That it took Yuriy Andropov, who succeeded Brezhnev as general secretary in November 1982, eight months to become chairman of the Supreme Soviet presidium suggested that at first Andropov did not have the kind of power held by his immediate predecessor.[7]

Andropov's successor, Konstantin Chernenko, was the exception that proved the rule. He was appointed to the top state post shortly after his election as party leader in 1984, in large part because he was already a sick man and was probably not seen by his colleagues as any kind of threat, regardless of how many offices he held. Gorbachev, however, required more than three years to gain the post of chairman of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet. Gorbachev himself said that times had changed and that it was no longer "appropriate" for one person to hold both jobs.[8] It was a sign of Gorbachev's increased strength within the leadership when in September 1988, the times having apparently changed yet again, the General Secretary took over the chairmanship of the presidium of the Supreme Soviet.

This situation changed once more in May 1989, when Gorbachev was elected to the new post of chairman of the Supreme Soviet. Despite the obvious similarity between the two titles, the post he had assumed in September 1988 was far less powerful than the chairmanship of the Supreme Soviet. Before its transformation into a standing parliament in 1989, the USSR Supreme Soviet was a rubber-stamp body that met briefly about twice a year.[9] The Supreme Soviet, its presidium, and its standing commissions, notwithstanding the wide range of powers these bodies supposedly enjoyed un-

[3]The policies of Khrushchev alienated many sectors of Soviet society but, according to Andrey Gromyko, his attempt to divide the CPSU into two separate organizations (one for agriculture, the other for industry) was the precipitating cause for his ouster. See the interview with Gromyko in *The Observer* (London), Apr. 2, 1989.

[4]Gorbachev proposed at the 19th Party Conference that a party committee whose first secretary failed to win election as chairman of the corresponding soviet, should "draw the appropriate conclusion," i.e., remove him from his party post (*Pravda*, June 29, 1988). It could presumably follow that, should the USSR Congress of People's Deputies reject the candidacy of the party general secretary for the post of chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the CPSU Central Committee should choose another leader.

[5]*Argumenty i Fakty* (Moscow), No. 51, 1989; *Pravda*, Jan. 31, 1990.

[6]*Pravda*, Feb. 4, 1990.

[7]Andropov was elected a member of the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet in November 1982, but the office of chairman of the presidium remained unoccupied until Andropov filled it himself in June 1983. On the resistance of Andropov's colleagues to his election as chairman of the presidium, see Myron Rush, "Succeeding Brezhnev," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), January-February 1983, p. 6; and Boris Meissner, "Transitions in the Kremlin," ibid., p. 12.

[8]*Pravda*, July 3, 1985. With characteristic agility, Gorbachev turned this setback to his advantage: he nominated Foreign Minister Andrey Gromyko for chairman and made his own ally, Eduard Shevardnadze, head of the foreign ministry.

[9]See Stephen White, "The USSR Supreme Soviet: a Developmental Perspective," in Daniel Nelson and Stephen White, Eds., *Communist Legislatures in Comparative Perspective*, Albany, NY, State University of New York Press, 1982, pp. 125–59.

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der the 1977 Soviet constitution, never acted other than under the strict control of the CPSU.

At the end of 1988, amendments to the Soviet constitution of 1977 expanded the powers of both the Supreme Soviet and its chairman.[10] Functions previously belonging to the Communist Party were transferred both to the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet. Many of the members of the Congress—USSR people's deputies—were elected on a competitive basis, which has increased not only their authority but also their accountability to the electorate. The Supreme Soviet is now a standing legislature, in session for the better part of the year. Its members have time to engage in serious legislative activity; they have, indeed, shown considerable assertiveness in exercising their new rights and duties.

Gorbachev first proposed the creation of a standing parliament and a more powerful chairmanship on June 28, 1988—the opening day of the 19th Party Conference.[11] The suggestion came as a complete surprise to almost everyone.[12] This perhaps should not have been the case, for hints had been dropped in the weeks prior to the conference that such a change was under consideration. Writing in *Moscow News* on June 12, 1988, for example, Soviet journalist Melor Sturua floated the idea of a constitutional reform involving the introduction of an executive presidency. Sturua's proposal differed in two important ways from that put forward by Gorbachev at the 19th Party Conference. First, Sturua suggested that the new president be elected by nationwide ballot. Second, he did not advocate that the posts of party leader and state president be held by the same person. On the contrary, Sturua argued that the appointment of an executive president "would make it possible to return to the general secretary the functions that were his in Lenin's time—above all, organizational functions."[13]

A few days later, the commentator and theoretician Fedor Burlatskiy argued that it was desirable for the Soviet Union to legalize and legitimize the tradition whereby the party leader was also the de facto leader of the state.[14] Burlatskiy, who has a record for testing public opinion in advance of various official initiatives, proposed that the party general secretary no longer be chosen by the Politburo or CPSU Central Committee but be elected "directly at the Party Congress, whereupon he would run for the post of president in a direct, secret, nationwide election." The articles by Burlatskiy and Sturua marked the first time that the official Soviet media had suggested the party's blessing alone might no longer be enough to justify the selection of the country's leader.

Gorbachev's proposal turned out to be less "democratic" than either Sturua's or Burlatskiy's proposals. First, the selection of the general secretary was left in the hands of the party elite, namely, the Central Committee; second, the Supreme Soviet chairman was not to be chosen by a nationwide vote but by the Congress of People's Deputies. Gorbachev also proposed that the first secretaries of party committees at all levels should run for chairman of the corresponding soviets, which clearly suggested that the general secretary would stand for election as chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet. He justified this proposal on the grounds that it would invest the soviets with the authority of the party and create a coalition between the party and the legislative bodies at all levels. This would give the soviets additional muscle and increase their ability to monitor and control government activity.

In any political system, the personality of the leader, his strengths and weaknesses, and his skills at political infighting play a crucial role. In the hands of such a forceful personality and skilled politician as Gorbachev, and in a system like that of the Soviet Union, with its strong tradition of popular deference to the leadership, the possibility clearly existed for the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet to be subordinated to the chairman, instead of vice versa. Misgivings were expressed on this score at the Party Conference.[15] Even Gorbachev's supporters were concerned that the new post might concentrate too much power in the hands of one man and be open to abuse should Gorbachev leave the scene. The late Andrey Sakharov, for example, argued that to appoint a president "with such powers in a country that does not have a multiparty system is just insanity. This is practically boundless power. Today it is Gorbachev, but tomorrow it could be

[10]For the changes, see *Pravda*, Dec. 3, 1988. For an evaluation of the new system, see Dawn Mann, Robert Monyak, and Elizabeth Teague, *The Supreme Soviet: A Biographical Directory*, Munich, RFE/RL, and Washington, DC, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1989.

[11]*Pravda*, June 29, 1988.

[12]See, for example, Leonid Batkin's comment in "Supporters and Opponents of *Perestroika:* The Second Joint *Soviet Economy* Roundtable," *Soviet Economy* (Washington, DC), October-December 1988, p. 295.

[13]On Stalin's appointment in April 1922 as general secretary and the way he transformed the post, "which was originally concerned solely with party organization," into the most important in the political system, see Leonard Schapiro, *The Communist Party of the Soviet Union*, Eyre & Spottiswoode, London, 1960, pp. 248 ff.; and Adam Ulam, *Stalin: The Man and His Era*, New York, Viking Press, 1973, pp. 204 ff.

[14]*Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Moscow), June 15, 1988. Burlatskiy told Soviet television on Feb. 22, 1990, that in 1964, as a Central Committee staff member, he served on a working group that proposed creating an executive presidency. At that time, he said, the idea met with derision from party leader Nikita Khrushchev.

[15]The conference debates are summarized in Dawn Mann, *Paradoxes of Soviet Reform: the Nineteenth Communist Party Conference*, Washington, DC, The Center for Strategic and International Studies, 1988, pp. 68–73.

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somebody else."[16] It also appeared that there was considerable resistance within the party. The resolution on political reform adopted at the close of the conference approved most of Gorbachev's proposals, including the election of a "chairman of the Supreme Soviet," but it was silent about the chairman's powers and duties.[17]

The Powers of the Supreme Soviet

The Supreme Soviet has always been dominated by the CPSU. The source of the party's influence lay primarily in the strict control it exercised over the selection of candidates to run for election to the legislature, as well as in the party's power of appointment to all official posts of any significance (the *nomenklatura* system). Moreover, the party's guiding principle of "democratic centralism" required all its members to observe strictly its discipline in the execution of official decisions. The party was also virtually the sole provider of information to the legislators. In addition, legislators were limited in their work because they did not have the staffs, research facilities, and technological aids that their counterparts in the West have. Finally, the party was in a position not only to reward those who did its bidding but, through its control of the law enforcement agencies, to punish those who did not.

On a deeper level, the party's influence over the legislature was rooted in the rejection by the drafters of successive Soviet constitutions of a fundamental principle of liberal democracy: the separation of powers. The constitutions of Western democracies (most rigidly the US constitution, less rigidly the constitution of the Fifth French Republic or Britain's uncodified constitution, to give just a few examples) delineate a separation of powers among the branches of government—legislative, executive, and judicial—and establish a system of checks and balances to ensure that no branch is able to dominate the others. The Soviet constitution provides for no such separation of powers, no system of checks and balances. On the contrary, it deliberately fuses powers. In the words of a leading Western specialist on constitutional law, "whoever controls the Supreme Soviet legislates, executes, and adjudicates without any institutional check or balance on his authority and [through the application of the principle of democratic centralism] controls every inferior echelon of government throughout the Soviet Union."[18]

Fusion of powers remains a characteristic of the Soviet system under Gorbachev.[19] The USSR Supreme Soviet, according to the constitution as amended in 1988, "is the standing legislative, administrative, and monitoring organ of state power."[20] Under Gorbachev's political reforms, the Supreme Soviet has assumed some of the functions previously exercised by the highest party bodies. Attached to the Supreme Soviet, for instance, are 22 permanent committees and commissions. These not only prepare legislation for consideration by parliament but are meant to exercise some degree of public control over key areas of national life. The Supreme Soviet's Committee on Defense and State Security, for example, oversees the armed forces, the police, and the KGB.

The Powers of the President

The enhancement of the status of the Supreme Soviet, effected in 1989, increased the authority of its chairman. Under the constitutional amendments of 1988, he has the authority to determine the USSR's domestic, foreign, defense, and security policies. The chairman negotiates and signs international treaties; signs all laws adopted by the Congress of People's Deputies, the Supreme Soviet, and the presidium of the Supreme Soviet; and generally supervises the work of these bodies. He nominates his own first deputy, the chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers (i.e., the prime minister), the chairmen of the People's Control Committee and of the Supreme Court, the USSR procurator general, and the USSR chief arbiter.

As outlined above, the functions of the chairman of the Supreme Soviet now include some that were traditionally reserved for the party general secretary. Another function assigned to the Supreme Soviet chairman, and one of the most important, is the chairmanship of the Defense Council—which acts in wartime as the

[16]*The Washington Post,* Nov. 2, 1988. The legal expert Boris Kurashvili, one of the intellectuals influencing Gorbachev's reforms, also warned of the dangers involved. So powerful an office, Kurashvili argued, required effective parliamentary control and that, in turn, presupposed the existence of a multiparty system and a parliamentary opposition (*Izvestiya* [Moscow], Nov. 15, 1988).

[17]*Pravda,* July 5, 1988. Some debate apparently took place within the Central Committee on the question of which post—the general secretary, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, or the chairman of the Council of Ministers—should be the top office in the USSR. See Gorbachev's speech to the 19th Party Conference (*Pravda,* June 29, 1988). At a press conference immediately following the Party Conference, Anatoliy Luk'yanov said the delegates had agreed to give the chairman the powers outlined by Gorbachev (TASS, July 2, 1988).

[18]S. E. Finer, *Five Constitutions,* Harmondsworth, Penguin Books, 1979, p. 29.

[19]It should be noted that a new Soviet constitution is in preparation; no draft has yet been published, however.

[20]Some separation of powers between the legislative and judicial branches was attempted in December 1989, when the Congress of People's Deputies adopted a law on constitutional compliance and created a Committee for Constitutional Oversight. The committee is to function akin to a constitutional court, by reviewing all draft legislation with an eye to its constitutionality (*Izvestiya,* Dec. 26, 1989).

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USSR's highest military decision-making body and also plays an important role in peacetime.

At this point, a digression is in order. Gorbachev is still the party's general secretary and has by no means relinquished the powers and prerogatives that have traditionally accompanied this post. Furthermore, the overwhelming majority of the members of the Supreme Soviet and of the deputies to the Congress of People's Deputies are CPSU members; a few are even members of the party's ruling bodies. Considerable overlap in the membership of the two institutions remains. The transfer to the Supreme Soviet of some functions that previously had belonged to the party, and the reorganization of the Central Committee apparatus that Gorbachev launched at the end of 1988, mean, however, that the party apparatus has been stripped to some extent of its power. Moreover, party members seem less constrained by party discipline than they were in the past, so that their behavior in the Supreme Soviet and Congress is now less predictable. Their votes show they do not always follow the party line and that "democratic centralism" is not being enforced in the Congress of People's Deputies or the Supreme Soviet.

More important perhaps is the fact that, as a result of changes in the law on elections to the Congress of People's Deputies and the creation of a standing Supreme Soviet, the nature of the overlapping membership between party and legislature has changed. In the past, members of the Central Committee dominated the Supreme Soviet; today that domination no longer exists. Indeed, the number of high-ranking party officials among the USSR Supreme Soviet deputies is strikingly low. Every full and candidate member of the Politburo and every member of the Secretariat who is not a member of the USSR Council of Ministers is a member of the Congress. But, when the Supreme Soviet was elected in May 1989, only three members of the Politburo and Secretariat succeeded in winning seats in that institution: Gorbachev, Anatoliy Luk'yanov, and Vitaliy Vorotnikov. (Yevgeniy Primakov, Volodymyr Ivashko, and Yuriy Manayenkov, who were brought into the party's leading bodies in the fall of 1989, are also members of the Supreme Soviet.)

A similar state of affairs pertains with regard to the representation of other officials in the Supreme Soviet. Four republic party first secretaries are not members of the Supreme Soviet: Ayaz Mutalibov (Azerbaijan), Vaino Väljas (Estonia), Petr Luchinskiy (Moldavia), and Islam Karimov (Uzbekistan). Even fewer republic second secretaries or council of ministers chairmen are members. In sharp contrast to past practice, only two of the RSFSR and one of the non-RSFSR oblast party first secretaries currently in office were elected to the Supreme Soviet, and only a few oblast party first secretaries serve on the 22 Supreme Soviet committees and commissions.[21] The chairmen of the 15 Union-republic Supreme Soviets are, however, ex-officio members of the USSR Supreme Soviet presidium; only three (those from Belorussia, Kazakhstan, and Moldavia) are not also members of the Supreme Soviet itself.[22]

It is difficult to determine whether the relatively low representation of members of the party's leading central and regional bodies in the new legislative bodies was intentional. Certainly, the exclusion of USSR ministers was deliberate: it would be improper for ministers to serve as deputies, because it is the task of the Supreme Soviet to monitor the work of the Council of Ministers. But, given that the CPSU, as a "public organization," had 100 seats to assign in the Congress of People's Deputies, and that the Central Committee itself filled those seats, the fact that the Central Committee did not elect more of its own members to the Congress reinforces the impression that its decision to limit the presence of top party officials was intentional. Another factor contributing to the low representation of top party officials seems to have been that the leaders of the CPSU overestimated the party's popular appeal; the defeat of many party officials in both contested and uncontested elections to the Congress of People's Deputies in the spring of 1989 automatically meant the losers were excluded from the Supreme Soviet.

It is less clear why so many top party leaders who had won election to the Congress were excluded from the Supreme Soviet. The lists of nominees to the Supreme Soviet were, after all, drawn up in advance, at meetings attended by Politburo members, who could presumably have insisted on the inclusion of officials of their choice.[23] A plausible explanation is that many officials

[21]The party first secretary in the North-Ossetian ASSR, Aleksandr Dzasokhov, is chairman of the Supreme Soviet Committee on International Affairs. Yuriy Samsonov, who heads the Ul'yanovsk party organization, lost election to the Supreme Soviet but does serve on the Committee on Defense and State Security. Yakutiya's Yuriy Prokopev also serves on a Supreme Soviet committee. Vladimir Foteyev, party first secretary in the Chechen-Ingush ASSR, won a seat in the Supreme Soviet and was elected chairman of a committee; at that point he resigned from his party post to devote himself full-time to his new duties. Leonid Sharin, who heads the Amur party organization, and Ivan D'yakov, party first secretary in Astrakhan', are both members of the Supreme Soviet but have apparently decided to combine the duties of oblast party first secretary and Supreme Soviet deputy.

[22]Membership in the Supreme Soviet is not automatically granted to members of the Supreme Soviet presidium. For the presidium's composition, see footnote 26.

[23]For example, V. Shcherbytskyi met with Ukrainian deputies (Radio Moscow, May 11, 1989); Vorotnikov met with Leningrad deputies (Radio Moscow, May 18, 1989); and Gorbachev and other Politburo members met with the Assembly of Representatives (chosen by the Union-republic caucuses of deputies) to select candidates for election to the Supreme Soviet (Radio Moscow, May 24, 1989; Associated Press, May 25, 1989).

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felt that it would be impossible to combine their other duties with those of a full-time parliamentarian. Alternatively, they may have underestimated the significance of the Supreme Soviet. It is also true that any member of the Congress of People's Deputies may attend and speak at sessions of the Supreme Soviet and its committees and commissions, which gives those who were not elected a chance to participate (though without the right to vote). On the basis of reports of the activities of Politburo members and Central Committee secretaries—which are still chronicled in the central press—it would appear, however, that few of them exercise this right on a regular basis.

The Soviet Presidency in Comparative Perspective

The 20th century has been called the age of "executive aggrandizement" during which the role of legislatures has gradually been whittled away. Gorbachev's assumption of the chairmanship of the Supreme Soviet—a post tailor-made for and by himself[24]—at first sight calls to mind the way Charles de Gaulle had the constitution of the Fifth French Republic written to make the French presidency fit him. Other similarities suggest themselves. As de Gaulle in 1958 was chosen to rescue a nation from the threat of civil war, so Gorbachev in 1985 assumed the leadership of a country engulfed in social and economic crises. France was embroiled in a demoralizing imperial entanglement in Algeria that de Gaulle brought to a close. Similarly, it fell to Gorbachev to extricate his country from its bruising military engagement in Afghanistan. De Gaulle used a strong executive presidency to restore France's self-confidence, usher in a prolonged period of economic growth and prosperity, and enhance his nation's role as a respected actor on the world stage. Gorbachev no doubt seeks to do the same for the Soviet Union.

The absence of a multiparty system in the Soviet Union has until now ruled out precise comparisons between its political system and those of Western democracies, be they parliamentary or presidential. However, some rough and ready comparisons can be made and are useful in highlighting the differences between the systems, now that a multiparty system might take shape in the USSR as well.

An important difference between Soviet and Western political systems lies in the accountability of the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, which in turn is rooted in the way he is elected. Following a general election in Britain, for example, the Queen calls upon the person she judges best able to command a majority of votes in the House of Commons. The person chosen must be a member of parliament and is usually the leader of the majority party; he becomes the chief executive (i.e., prime minister of the new government). The government can be removed following a defeat either in the House of Commons or in a general election. In addition, the prime minister may ask the sovereign to dissolve parliament and call fresh elections—though only at the risk of his party's majority in parliament and hence his own job. Under Britain's parliamentary system, therefore, the fates of the parliament and the chief executive are intimately intertwined.

Under France's semi-presidential system, the president is independent of parliament. The president, who is elected by universal suffrage, can dissolve the parliament virtually at will, but cannot himself be removed by the parliament. The president appoints the prime minister (but may sometimes find himself obliged by the results of parliamentary elections to choose the leader of a party other than his own). While Britain's prime minister is both the chief of the executive branch and the leader of the legislature, the French system provides a classic example of the subordination of the legislature to the executive.

Under the presidential system in the United States the president can effectively be said to be elected by universal suffrage, even though the electorate's choice is mediated by the states, and the president is technically chosen by the Electoral College. The president and Congress are elected in separate elections and are independent of one another. Thus, the president cannot dismiss Congress; nor can he be easily removed by it.[25] The US president is his own chief executive and appoints his own cabinet (with the advice and consent of the Senate). Presidential power is constrained, however, by a separation of powers which ordains that no branch of government enjoys exclusive powers but that power is shared and controlled by reciprocal checks requiring the executive and legislative branches to act together or not at all. Moreover, the Supreme Court has the power to examine legislative and executive branch actions to determine whether they conform to the US constitution.

Until February 1990, Gorbachev insisted that the

[24]Gorbachev headed the commission that revised the constitution in light of the planned changes (*The New York Times*, Oct. 22, 1988).

[25]The US Congress can remove the president of the United States only through impeachment. This long and complex process has been threatened on a number of occasions but was attempted only once, in 1865, and was unsuccessful.

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USSR was adopting a parliamentary and not a presidential system. Thus, under the constitutional amendments of 1988, the chairman of the Supreme Soviet is elected by the Congress of People's Deputies from among its own members. Although he can dissolve neither the Congress of People's Deputies nor the Supreme Soviet, he may himself be recalled at any time by secret ballot by the Congress of People's Deputies. The Soviet constitution is vague as to what circumstances might lead to such a ballot, and as regards voting particulars. But the intent to establish the accountability of the chief executive to the legislative branch is nonetheless clear.

Constraints on the Presidency

As noted above, the constitutional amendments of 1988 place an important constraint on the power of the Supreme Soviet chairman by stating that he may not dissolve the Congress of People's Deputies or the Supreme Soviet. In addition, the amended constitution specifies that orders issued by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet may be repealed by the Supreme Soviet. (The constitution does not say, however, what might happen if the chairman appealed such a decision to the Congress of People's Deputies.)

The power of the chairman is further restricted by virtue of the fact that certain prerogatives (for example, the right to declare war or to proclaim a state of emergency) belong to the presidium of the Supreme Soviet, which, although it is headed by the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, is composed of a majority of members not appointed by or responsible to him.[26]

Although the Soviet constitution as amended in 1988 says the chairman of the Supreme Soviet is "the highest official of the Soviet state," official sources insist that the presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet remains the "collective" or "collegial" head of state.[27] There seems little doubt that the obligation to consult the large and unwieldy presidium restricts the chairman's ability to take fast and authoritative decisions in a crisis. Moscow's delay in declaring a state of emergency in the Azerbaijan capital, Baku, is cited as a case in point. Attacks against Armenians began on January 12–13, 1990, but opposition from Azerbaijan's representative on the presidium meant that Moscow was unable to dispatch troops to the area until January 18.[28] Fedor Burlatskiy has complained that the Supreme Soviet, its chairman, and its presidium "could not provide an adequate response to the Armenian blockade, the massacre of Meskhetian Turks in Fergana, strikes in the coalfields, and illegal demonstrations in various parts of the country," thereby revealing the flaws in the arrangement.[29]

A further limit on the powers of the chairman of the Supreme Soviet arises from the fact that, as mentioned earlier, under the 1988 constitutional amendments he is not elected by universal suffrage. A president so elected can claim to have a popular mandate that can significantly strengthen his position vis-à-vis the legislature. In 1962, for example, de Gaulle introduced universal suffrage for the presidential election with the express purpose of strengthening his personal legitimacy and that of the presidency. As was noted above, Burlatskiy and Sturua advocated such an arrangement prior to the 19th Party Conference. Thereafter, calls for the chairman of the Supreme Soviet to be elected by universal suffrage increased in intensity. For example, the Soviet parliament's fledgling opposition group, the Interregional Group of Deputies, included such a recommendation in the platform it adopted in September 1989, arguing that such a system would make the president more accountable to the people.[30] In October 1989, striking Soviet coal miners in the Arctic region of Vorkuta added a call for the direct election of the Soviet president to their economic demands.[31] At the same time, the issue was being placed on the agenda of the USSR Supreme Soviet by deputies from the Baltic republics, who called for a constitutional amendment enabling the chairmen of the supreme soviets of the Union republics to be elected by universal suffrage.

Until February 1990, Gorbachev appeared unswayed by these appeals. Addressing the Supreme Soviet on October 23, 1989, he argued against such an amendment on the grounds that it would concentrate too much power in the hands of a single individual.[32] Gorbachev distinguished between a president (*prezi-*

[26]The presidium was strengthened when the constitution was amended in 1988. Instead of 39 members (a number of whom tended to be milkmaids or metal workers, or were placed there for purely symbolic reasons, such as astronaut Valentina Tereshkova), the presidium now has 42 members, all of whom are appointed ex officio. These are the chairman and first deputy chairman of the USSR Supreme Soviet, the chairmen of the USSR Supreme Soviet's two chambers (the Council of the Union and the Council of Nationalities), the chairman of the USSR People's Control Committee, the chairmen of the 15 Union-republic supreme soviets, and the chairmen of the 22 permanent commissions and committees of the USSR Supreme Soviet. Since its reconstitution in 1989, this body has taken a number of significant decisions; for example, it declared unconstitutional certain amendments made to the constitution of the Estonian SSR by the Estonian Supreme Soviet (TASS, Aug. 16, 1989).

[27]Ibid., Dec. 2, 1988.

[28]*The Washington Post*, Feb. 9, 1990.

[29]*Izvestiya*, Feb. 11, 1990.

[30]*Sovetskiy Fizik* (Moscow), No. 34, July 28, 1989.

[31]*The Washington Post*, Oct. 27, 1989.

[32]Radio Moscow, Oct. 23, 1989.

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An informal "caucus" of the Interregional Group at the first session of the Congress of People's Deputies: making a point is Yuriy Afanas'yev, and just to the right of his extended hand is seated former Moscow party organization leader Boris Yel'tsin.

—Novosti from Sovfoto.

dent) elected by the population and a chairman (*predsedatel'*) elected by the legislature. He said that while the former would be elected as an individual who could function independently of his soviet, the latter would have to act as the chairman of a collective. The first variant, Gorbachev maintained, would undermine efforts to ensure legislative control over the executive branch, while the second, which Gorbachev favored, would reinforce the authority of the soviets. Gorbachev went on to suggest that democratic processes were still too weak in the USSR to allow the concentration of such power in the hands of one man. "Isn't it too early to do that," he asked, "when we haven't really involved society in the political process?" Gorbachev warned against "making a mess of things by casting the soviets aside in the heat of the moment [and] starting off along the path of switching to presidential power." The "salvation" of the USSR, he argued, lay not in giving unrestrained power to a strong leader but in involving ordinary people in the political process.

Gorbachev Changes His Mind

In an apparent bid to overcome constraints on the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev proposed at a Central Committee plenum held in early February 1990 that the USSR should move to a presidential system. The draft party platform adopted at the plenum stated that the introduction of a presidential system was necessary "to speed up *perestroyka* and guarantee its irreversibility . . . to ensure the normal and efficient functioning of all state and public institutions during the process of democratization . . . to ensure the security of citizens . . . and to represent the state in the international arena."[33]

Gorbachev himself told the plenum that a strong presidency was necessary to establish a separation of powers in the Soviet political system. By this he seemed to mean reducing the party's stranglehold on power. The revamped Supreme Soviet exerts influence but, in comparison to the Politburo, has no real power. The source of the Politburo's power, as Burlatskiy has pointed out, lies in the fact that it is a small, working body in which all the key players—"the chairman of the Supreme Soviet, the head of the KGB, the minister of defense, the prime minister" are members.[34] Some Soviet commentators have, in this connection, described the party as a fourth branch of government.[35]

[33]TASS, Feb. 12, 1990.
[34]*Izvestiya*, Feb. 11, 1990.
[35]*Pravda*, Jan. 31, 1990.

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The draft party platform does not spell out the procedures for electing the new president, his powers, or the legislature's controls over his actions. It has been suggested, however, that the president might appoint his own cabinet, recall ministers, have the right to declare a state of emergency, veto legislation, and dissolve the Supreme Soviet. Whether the president would double as party general secretary is unclear; Gorbachev told a miners' meeting that he thought such an arrangement might be desirable only for a short time.[36]

During the second half of 1989, the Soviet press contained numerous calls for "an iron hand" to oversee the painful process of economic and social reform.[37] Gorbachev's proposals regarding the presidency left it quite unclear whether the new post would lead to more authoritarian or more democratic rule. The initial reaction from members of the Supreme Soviet was extremely cautious. For example, people's deputy Anatoliy Sobchak said that—although he welcomed the idea of a presidential system—great care would have to be taken to ensure that the executive branch was under the control of the legislature. Other deputies suggested that an impeachment mechanism was necessary.[38]

Gorbachev's Party

Initially, Gorbachev's ability to advance his policies was based on the resources at his disposal as General Secretary of the CPSU. Of all these resources, the "personnel weapon" was long the most effective and important. In what came to be known as the "circular flow of power," the party leader attempted to maintain his political position and ensure compliance with his policies by placing his protégés in key posts.[39]

Using his power to appoint and dismiss, Gorbachev has brought about a massive turnover of officials. He continues to call for the replacement of more personnel, at every level from the Politburo down, which is surely prompted by more than the need to pack the Central Committee with supporters.[40] In fact, continual personnel changes testify to the existing system's inability to produce officials who are able and willing to put *perestroyka* into practice.[41] In the past, to be sure, party officials had to exhibit some professional expertise, but the key factor in the survival of many officials was their link to leaders at a higher level. Gorbachev has sought to break this protection racket and to rely instead on competence and performance.

As part of Gorbachev's effort to find the right people, get them into office, and hold them accountable if they fail, a number of significant changes in the way leading officials in party, state, government, and other posts are dismissed and appointed have either been introduced or are under consideration.[42] Multicandidate secret-ballot elections for party posts have been held and limited terms of office are under consideration; both will help to increase the accountability of officials and regularize turnover. It has been suggested that the *nomenklatura* system be abolished, and that more non-party people—who were frequently barred from the lists of approved candidates—be appointed to responsible posts. The introduction of multicandidate secret-ballot elections to the soviets means that membership in them is no longer guaranteed to particular classes of officials. Government officials are now barred from membership in the soviet that monitors their work. USSR ministers have been subjected to rigorous confirmation hearings in the Supreme Soviet, and a number were not confirmed.

The effect of Gorbachev's political reforms has been to reduce the general secretary's power over personnel appointments and dismissals and to increase that of the population. Officials are being forced to look down

[36]Ibid., Feb. 4, 1990. According to a well-informed Soviet source, Gorbachev's thinking about an executive presidency was strongly influenced by his conversations with Poland's Wojciech Jaruzelski.

[37]For example, *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, Aug. 16, 1989.

[38]Central Television (Moscow), Feb. 14, 1990.

[39]On the importance of the personnel weapon for the general secretary and its role in the circular flow of power, see Robert Daniels, "Soviet Politics Since Khrushchev," in John W. Strong, Ed., *The Soviet Union Under Brezhnev and Kosygin*, New York, Van Nostrand-Reinhold, 1971, p. 20; and Zbigniew Brzezinski and Samuel P. Huntington, *Political Power USA/USSR*, New York, Viking, 1964, pp. 194–95.

[40]*Pravda*, Sept. 20, 1989 and Feb. 5, 1990; *Izvestiya*, Apr. 26, 1989.

[41]A separate but related question is whether there are enough people of the type Gorbachev is looking for, particularly in the party. Recent articles have called for the appointment of party officials who are less "technocratic," more "individualistic," capable of speaking well publicly and of thinking analytically, familiar with information technologies, and skilled in human relations (see *Pravda*, Oct. 16, 1989). But will these people, who have presumably not been included on the *nomenklatura* lists in the past, want to serve as party secretaries and subject themselves to all the harassment that now entails? Gorbachev posed a similar question at the Supreme Soviet (Radio Moscow, June 27, 1989).

[42]The 19th Party Conference adopted a resolution on reform of the CPSU which cautioned that the *nomenklatura* system was "obsolete" (*Pravda*, July 5, 1988). More recently, a meeting of the CPSU Central Committee's Commission on Party Development and Personnel Policy concluded that it was time to abolish the *nomenklatura* system in favor of a more democratic process that would bring "active campaigners for *perestroyka*" into office, drawing not only on party members but on non-party people from "all sections of the population and nationalities" (TASS, Oct. 14, 1989). As a first step, the Central Committee will pass responsibility for the vetting of 800 posts to lower-level party committees, who will in turn divest themselves of the need to approve 12,000 lesser-ranking party posts. All state and public organizations are to decide personnel appointments independently (Novosti, Oct. 20, 1989). See also an interview with Valeriy Sharkov, chief of the CSPU Central Committee Department for Party Development and Cadre Policy (ibid., Oct. 30, 1989).

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(to their constituents) rather than up (to their official bosses). If carried to their logical conclusion, the changes will end the "circular flow of power."

To see how Gorbachev has managed personnel appointments both to secure his own position and to spur implementation of *perestroyka,* we will review briefly recent personnel changes instituted in the government and the party.

USSR Council of Ministers. Indicative of Gorbachev's frustrations with implementing *perestroyka* have been the massive changes in the structure and personnel of the USSR Council of Ministers. Gorbachev had both economic and political reasons for making these changes. The Council of Ministers' ineffective implementation of Gorbachev's early economic reform efforts and the continuing poor performance of the Soviet economy were important factors. Another was the party's loss of control over the ministerial bureaucracy, which had grown significantly in terms of both numbers of people and organizational complexity.[43] This loss of control meant that the party adopted economic reforms only to find it had little power to enforce their implementation by the Council of Ministers.

A substantial turnover in the USSR Council of Ministers has taken place since March 1985, with 67 out of 72 ministers having been appointed under Gorbachev.[44] Twenty-seven of the current ministers have no prior experience in the Council of Ministers, which suggests increasing dissatisfaction on Gorbachev's part with the cadres available within the Council of Ministers itself.[45]

The most important development in Gorbachev's personnel policy with regard to the Council of Ministers is that the ministers are now subject to genuine confirmation, first, in USSR Supreme Soviet committee hearings, and then by the Supreme Soviet as a whole. It is still the case that ministerial appointments are approved by the party—all of Nikolay Ryzhkov's nominees were approved by the Central Committee before being sent to the Supreme Soviet committees for confirmation.[46] But 12 of these pre-approved nominees were rejected either in committee, or by the Supreme Soviet, or both.[47]

Thus, on the one hand, the personal control of both the general secretary and the chairman of the Council of Ministers over the naming of ministers has been weakened as a result of the way in which the Supreme Soviet now approaches its task of confirmation. On the other hand, by submitting the nominees for confirmation to the Supreme Soviet, the party's right to propose the candidates is legitimated.

Politburo. Since March 1985, Gorbachev has had to work within the confines of shifting Politburo alliances and to build coalitions in support of his policies. Members' accounts of the lengthy debates that have characterized Politburo meetings under Gorbachev testify to his skill in managing his colleagues and to the increasing inability of that body to block his policies. When necessary, Gorbachev has been able to "clean house" in the Politburo, as he did at Central Committee plenums held in September 1988 and September 1989.

The Politburo is now comprised of 11 full and 7 candidate members, making it the smallest Politburo since 1961.[48] Although its members represent a wide range of views, its composition is such that conservatives are in all probability in a minority on a number of crucial issues. Given that conservatives no longer appear to hold posts that would permit them to mount a threat to Gorbachev, he seems to have little reason to dismiss them. Their continued membership may, in fact, work to his advantage by mollifying conservative elements within Soviet society.

Despite increased *glasnost'* concerning party affairs, the Politburo's precise role is currently obscure. That its role has changed is attested to by the complaints of conservative party officials at a Central Com-Committee conference for republic, *kray,* and oblast first secretaries in July 1989.[49] But the changes have not visibly diminished the Politburo's influence. For example, evidence of the Politburo's intention to keep tabs on the activities of the legislature can be found in the election of Yevgeniy Primakov, chairman of the Supreme Soviet's Council of the Union, to candidate membership of the Politburo in September 1989,[50] and the Politburo's approval of agendas for the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet. Further evidence of continuing Politburo involvement in policy formation is provided by reports of Politburo meetings: their agenda

[43]See Alice C. Gorlin, "The Power of Soviet Industrial Ministries in the 1980s," *Soviet Studies* (Glasgow), July 1985, pp. 353–71.

[44]For details, see Dawn Mann, "Gorbachev's Personnel Policy: The USSR Council of Ministers," Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR,* Nov. 17, 1989, pp. 8–13.

[45]There are a few ministers who are hard to classify. Viktor Gerashchenko was abroad until 1985 when he returned to the domestic banking system; Boris Belousov and Vitaliy Konovalov probably began their Council of Ministers careers under Brezhnev, moving into deputy or first deputy ministerial slots under Andropov.

[46]Radio Moscow, July 14, 1989.

[47]Voting results were published in *Argumenty i Fakty,* No. 28, 1989.

[48]The reduction in the size of the Politburo has been accompanied by a drop in the representation of non-Russians on it.

[49]*Pravda,* July 21, 1989. Since January 1989, the Politburo stopped meeting on a weekly basis (*Izvestiya TsK KPSS* [Moscow], No. 1, 1989).

[50]Primakov's counterpart, Rafik Nishanov, who chairs the Supreme Soviet's Council of Nationalities, is not eligible for Politburo membership since he is not a member of the CPSU Central Committee.

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does not show a reduction in the range or importance of the topics discussed.[51]

Secretariat. Initially, Gorbachev paid careful attention to the Central Committee Secretariat, gradually staffing it with men loyal to him and expanding its sphere of responsibility so that it could act as a counterweight to the Politburo. But once he had succeeded in strengthening his grip on the Politburo, he no longer needed a powerful Secretariat. In September 1988, in order to undercut an apparent attempt by Yegor Ligachev to assert control over the Secretariat, Gorbachev launched a reorganization of the party apparatus that resulted in the dismissal of several conservative leaders and placed the Secretariat in a state of limbo by assigning much of its work to new Central Committee commissions.

Exactly one year later, Gorbachev appointed four new secretaries, which seemed to indicate an intention on his part to rebuild the Secretariat. A possible explanation for the revival of the Secretariat is that the distribution of its duties to the Central Committee commissions failed to work in practice. With the exception of the Commission on Legal Policy, the commissions have met infrequently.[52] The formulations contained in the CPSU's draft platform suggest, however, that Gorbachev favors the present organizational arrangement, that is, commissions headed by Central Committee secretaries.

Central Committee. Opposition to Gorbachev's plans has always existed within the Central Committee. It need only be recalled that the plenum of January 1987 was postponed three times to realize that these meetings are not always particularly amicable. More recently, in February 1990, the Central Committee refused to approve Gorbachev's proposals regarding reduction in the size of the Central Committee and the conduct of the upcoming elections to the 28th Party Congress.

Gorbachev has moved steadily to redesign the Central Committee and to reduce its power. A number of examples attest to such efforts. The version of the Party Rules adopted at the 27th Party Congress in 1986 omitted a key clause found in earlier versions that authorized the Central Committee to call a party-wide debate on occasions when there is no "firm majority . . . on vital questions of party policy." This clause could have been used by an opposition faction within the Central Committee as the basis for an appeal to party conservatives at large. The changes made in the Politburo in September 1988 deprived conservatives within the Central Committee of a number of potential leaders. At a Central Committee plenum in March 1989, at which the party's deputies to the Congress of People's Deputies were elected, Gorbachev invited a number of people who were not members of the Central Committee to participate in the discussion and the voting, thereby diluting the strength of conservative views. Perhaps most important, in April 1989, he secured the "voluntary" resignation of 110 full and candidate members of the Central Committee and the Central Auditing Commission, a step that significantly reduced the chances that any conservatives who remained on the Politburo would find a receptive audience in the Central Committee.[53]

At the February 1990 Central Committee plenum, the date of the next Party Congress was advanced to June 1990. The Congress will elect a new Central Committee, and although the Central Committee will probably be formed according to the current Party Rules, Gorbachev will nevertheless have an opportunity to preside over a substantial change in the membership of the Central Committee. Nearly one-fourth of its current 249 full members are "dead souls" (i.e., members who have either retired from posts carrying Central Committee membership or been demoted to posts which have not, in the past, warranted full membership), who will undoubtedly be replaced. Their removal should help Gorbachev to overcome the current Central Committee's opposition to the changes presented in the draft platform and facilitate their acceptance.[54]

RSFSR regional party secretaries. It is at the regional level that the most persuasive evidence of the increasing influence of public opinion on personnel matters presents itself. Between December 1, 1989, and February 14, 1990, six RSFSR regional party committee first secretaries—and sometimes entire bureaus—were removed from office; in almost every case the decisive factor was a lack of popular support.[55] Local public

[51]See, in particular, the extensive reports of the Politburo's deliberations at its meeting on November 3, 1989 in *Pravda,* Nov. 4, 7, 8, 9 and 11, 1989.

[52]The Secretariat as an institution was mentioned again at the October 4, 1989, Politburo meeting (Radio Moscow, Oct. 5, 1989). See Yegor Ligachev's interview on Hungarian Television (Budapest), July 25, 1989, and also *Izvestiya TsK KPSS,* No. 1, 1990.

[53]As a result of the resignations, representation of the party apparatus among the full members of the CPSU Central Committee fell from 44.5 percent to 33.9 percent.

[54]Gorbachev has been preoccupied with the role of the Central Committee for some time: addressing the Central Committee on September 19, 1989, he said it was necessary "to discuss what kind of Central Committee we would like to have, how it should be formed, and how it should operate to perform its responsible mission" (*Pravda,* Sept. 20, 1989).

[55]The number of forced resignations at this level has risen sharply in Ukraine as well. For details, see Dawn Mann, "Authority of Regional Party Leaders Crumbling," Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR,* No. 8, 1990, pp. 1–6.

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opinion is also playing a key role in determining who will succeed the disgraced first secretary. In some regions, non-party members are even being allowed to participate in the voting. Another new factor in the replacement of RSFSR oblast party first secretaries since the elections to the Congress of People's Deputies in March 1989 has been the resignation of a number of first secretaries who were not elected to serve as USSR people's deputies.

There has also been a change in the type of official chosen as first secretary. During his first four years in office, Gorbachev generally appointed as first secretaries men who had worked in Moscow, often as CPSU Central Committee inspectors (although most of them had served previously in the region they were appointed to lead).[56] A dramatic change in the pattern of appointments began in April 1989: of the 12 secretaries appointed between April and November 1989, not one had served previously in Moscow.

The reason for this return to a personnel policy that resembles Brezhnev's more than Gorbachev's during his first four years seems to be the introduction of competitive elections. Roughly half of the first secretaries appointed since April 1989 have been elected in multicandidate and, in some cases, secret-ballot elections. If this practice is extended, the choice of familiar local figures may become common throughout the regional party apparatus. Party discipline notwithstanding, party committees may not always choose to elect as their leader an outsider recommended by Moscow.

Party personnel in non-Russian republics. Especially in the past two years, personnel changes in the non-Russian republics have often been prompted by considerations of actual or imminent political instability arising from interethnic conflict. This is in stark contrast to the reasons underlying the replacements made in 1985 and 1986, namely, a struggle against corruption and Moscow's desire to reverse the devolution of power to local party organizations that had occurred under Brezhnev. The present rate of turnover suggests that Gorbachev's hand is being forced by regional developments beyond his control.[57]

Unrest in the non-Russian republics has serious implications for Gorbachev's personal power and authority, which are unlikely to be advanced by the breakup of the Soviet empire. Yet, Gorbachev seems prepared to grant a degree of local autonomy for the sake of political stability. This approach necessarily affects his selection of personnel in the republics. Gorbachev is trying to appoint party leaders in the republics on whom he can count to cope with rising separatist tides, to keep their republican party organizations united and within the CPSU, and simultaneously to implement the bundle of economic and political reforms called *perestroyka*. That some of these leaders are sympathetic to national aspirations may not be a bad thing from Gorbachev's point of view, provided this helps them to maintain political stability within a given republic. Nevertheless, appointing leaders who have identified themselves with local popular aspirations involves a calculated risk on Gorbachev's part.

Proposed Reorganization of the Party

At the February 1990 CPSU Central Committee plenum, major organizational changes affecting the CPSU were discussed.[58] If these changes are approved at the 28th CPSU Congress in June 1990, the Politburo as it exists today will be replaced by a body radically different in composition and, as a result, in function. The CPSU Congress will elect a party chairman and an unspecified number of deputy chairmen (probably two), and the Central Committee will elect a Presidium. One person may be elected to serve as party chairman for the entire term of office (presumably five years) or the chairmanship may rotate among the members of the Presidium. The Presidium is to consist of some 30 members, including representatives of each of the 15 Union-republics as well as rank-and-file party members. Presidium members will be professional, salaried politicians who will "handle political and organizational issues" between sessions of the Central Committee.

The draft platform makes no mention of what would become of the Secretariat. It does say that CPSU Central Committee secretaries will be in charge of commissions comprised of Central Committee members and "other authoritative communists." The secretaries will be elected by the Central Committee and work under the supervision of the party chairman and his deputies. Central Committee secretaries will be barred from membership in the Presidium. The rector of the Moscow Higher Party School, V. N. Shostakovskiy, who played a key role in drafting the platform, has said the task of the Secretariat should be to "manage the appar-

[56]For details, see idem, "Gorbachev's Personnel Policy: The RSFSR Regional Party First Secretaries," ibid., November 10, 1989, pp. 1–7.

[57]For details, see idem, "Gorbachev's Personnel Policies: The Non-Russian Republics," ibid., Dec. 1, 1989, pp. 8–13.

[58]See Gorbachev's opening speech to the plenum (Radio Moscow, Feb. 5, 1990); the draft CPSU platform (TASS, Feb. 12, 1990); remarks made at the closing press conference (Radio Moscow, Feb. 7, 1990); and the interview with V. N. Shostakovskiy, *Sovetskaya Kul'tura* (Moscow), Dec. 7, 1989.

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atus." The functions of the general secretary will, according to Shostakovskiy, return to what they were in "the pre-Stalin period." The general secretary will therefore be a "functionary elected by, but not a member of, the Politburo [Presidium]."[59]

The Central Committee, too, is to be reorganized. According to the draft platform, "it is necessary to renounce the system under which [the Central Committee] included mostly people holding specific posts."[60] The Central Committee is to be transformed into a standing body that meets almost continuously; its members will also be salaried. Gorbachev has proposed that the Central Committee be reduced in size and that candidate membership be eliminated altogether. To cope with its tasks, the Central Committee will be divided into commissions which, as mentioned above, will be headed by Central Committee secretaries. Every member will serve in at least one of these commissions.

Because these are as yet only proposals, and not particularly specific ones at that, it is difficult to say what the outcome of their implementation might be. Many questions immediately spring to mind. For example, which office will be more powerful, that of party chairman or of general secretary? How will depriving the Central Committee of its right to elect the party leader affect its place in the circular flow of power? And so on. One can imagine many interesting scenarios—including Gorbachev's resignation from the post of general secretary—but they are purely speculative.

Conclusions

In his dual role as general secretary of the CPSU and chairman of the Supreme Soviet, Gorbachev is already extremely powerful. His personal authority in both posts is—for now—unchallenged. Even his opponents admit there is at present no credible alternative to Gorbachev as leader. The changes proposed at the February 1990 Central Committee plenum seem devised to make him even more powerful.

In his capacity as general secretary, Gorbachev has repeatedly overcome opposition to his policies (often by agreeing to compromises that he later counteracted) and his control over cadre appointments at all levels has been impressive. As we have pointed out in this article, Gorbachev has employed the personnel weapon in innovative ways. He has made it a priority that appointees share his goals rather than manifest personal loyalty. In many cases, promoted newcomers seem to have few, if any, ties to the incumbent leaders, Gorbachev included.

The introduction of competitive elections—another feature of Gorbachev's personnel policy—promotes a similar goal. Aware that the traditional use of the personnel weapon is inadequate to the needs of the sort of society he envisages, Gorbachev has turned to multicandidate elections as a means of selecting the type of officials he seeks. His political reforms have resulted in an increase in the population's direct and indirect influence over leadership selection. His wager is that elections will bring into positions of responsibility officials who are committed to *perestroyka,* and accountable for its implementation. It is one of the paradoxes of Gorbachev's political strategy that the introduction of elections and the dismantling of the *nomenklatura* system have significantly weakened his ability to exact personal loyalty from those who hold important political positions. What Gorbachev has lost in personal control he hopes, however, to recoup in increased effectiveness.

One of the justifications Gorbachev has offered for the changes in the Soviet political system is the need for control over the bureaucracy. But the changes made go beyond the need to restrict the power of the apparatus. The new soviets are meant to act as unifying institutions, aggregating and reconciling all of society's "legitimate" interests. This, too, is a necessary function of government: when such a mechanism does not exist, explosions are bound to occur. The old soviets, with their tightly-controlled elections and limited powers, could not perform this task. Society had, as a result, become unstable and even ungovernable in some respects. Allowing popular participation in elections and in soviets introduces an element of control from below, making for a form of accountability that the system lacked.

It is still too early to know how Gorbachev intends to use the Supreme Soviet and how successful he will be. As chairman of the Supreme Soviet he has demonstrated an ability to control the agenda, steer the proceedings, and get most of his policies adopted by wide margins of votes. The strengthening of the Supreme Soviet has given Gorbachev access to an alternative and partially independent source of power and control. The Soviet Union could potentially be ruled through the soviets rather than through the party, and it is this prospect which party conservatives find most threatening, because they anticipate that party institutions will suffer a serious diminution of power.

Gorbachev's decision to allocate some of the party's power to the soviets recalls Lenin's exhortation to the

[59]Ibid.
[60]TASS, Feb. 12, 1990.

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Bolsheviks to seize power through the election of Bolsheviks to the soviets in 1917. This is what Gorbachev is trying to accomplish now. He has made it clear that he firmly believes in the CPSU's ability to continue to exercise "a leading and guiding role," but he is proposing that the party exercise this role in a different way. Rather than insist on the supremacy of party institutions, Gorbachev is pushing for greater activism by communists in state and government, which he defines as implementing the party line. Party members in non-party organizations are expected to give priority to the party's goals rather than to other bureaucratic and institutional interests.

Gorbachev is powerful, but he is not omnipotent. He has had to make compromises that have slowed the pace of reform; his proposals have sometimes been defeated in the Supreme Soviet; and the pace of change in many areas threatens to escape central control. Furthermore, he heads a party that is suffering from self-doubt and low popular esteem. Within the party itself, there is no longer agreement on the fundamental theoretical question of how to define socialism, which is making it difficult to reach consensus on almost any other issue. Gorbachev is also facing a serious economic crisis that cannot be quickly or easily overcome.

Gorbachev seems to think that the solution to these problems is the creation of a strong executive branch and the curtailment of the powers presently vested in the legislature.[61] The system Gorbachev is now proposing gives him several options. Two scenarios come to mind. This spring, local and republic elections will be held across the USSR. In many places, the CPSU is expected to take a severe beating. A multiparty system is also in the offing; this means that a non-Communist government is a possibility at some future date. Gorbachev might therefore assume a position analogous to that of Poland's Wojciech Jaruzelski—Communist president of a country with a non-Communist government. Alternatively, Gorbachev might decide that leading the Communist Party has become a political liability. In that case, he might himself leave the CPSU and run for president as the leader of some new, as yet unformed, political party.

[61] Although the legislative proposals for strengthening the Soviet presidency had not yet been formally submitted to the Supreme Soviet when this article was being completed, reports on the proposals by Soviet legislators suggest that Gorbachev is seeking a presidency that would dominate the USSR legislature as well as have the authority to overrule the legislatures of the republics. See *The Washington Post*, Feb. 21, 1990.

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First Party Secretaries: An Endangered Soviet Species?

Vladimir Brovkin

Until recently, the first secretary of the oblast party committee (*obkom*) was considered one of the most important actors in Soviet politics.[1] As a group, the *obkom* secretaries had a majority in the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (CPSU) and thus were able to exert much influence in the shaping of party policies. They also exercised considerable control over the *nomenklatura*, i. e., appointments to positions in the party, media, government, and social organizations within their jurisdictions. In fact, as one Soviet observer recently put it, the *obkom* first secretaries were the "feudal lords" of their regions.[2]

The first party secretary of the district party committee (*raykom*) and the city party committee (*gorkom*) falls below the *obkom* secretary in the CPSU hierarchy. In effect, the *raykom* and *gorkom* secretaries are vassals of the *obkom* secretaries and share the same political interest with their superiors in preserving the prerogatives of the party apparatus. They also exercise considerable power within their jurisdictions.

But as a consequence of the reforms initiated by Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev, the power structure of Soviet politics has changed profoundly. The role of the party secretaries is currently being redefined, and their power has diminished considerably as new political forces and new political institutions have appeared.

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New political forces include a host of informal societal and political organizations; the new political institutions include the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet at the top of the political ladder, and the newly-invigorated local soviets at the bottom.

Obkom secretaries, *raykom* and *gorkom* secretaries, and the defenders of the party apparatus at the top of the CPSU hierarchy have responded negatively to these new political currents. The critical questions now are: What is the future of the CPSU apparatus? Can the party apparatus adapt to the new political landscape, or will it disappear as an important political force? Will the secretaries on the *obkom* level and their subordinates at the city and district levels become extinct political species in the next five years?

New Roles for Party Secretaries

As Jerry Hough has observed, before the reforms initiated by Gorbachev, the *obkom* secretaries were responsible for two main tasks: ensuring social stability, and guaranteeing fulfillment of the industrial and agricultural plans for their jurisdictions.[3] This generalization also applies to the *raykom* and *gorkom* secretaries at their level of responsibility. In the late 1980's, however, the central party leadership attempted to redefine the political and economic roles of the regional and local party secretaries. They were to switch from administra-

[1]For a list of all oblast party first secretaries in the Russian republic, see Dawn Mann, "Gorbachev's Personnel Policy: The RSFSR Regional Party First Secretaries," Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR* (Munich), Nov. 10, 1989, p. 5.

[2]N. Chalyapin, "On the Verge of a Great Tragedy," *Argumenty i Fakty* (Moscow), No. 39, 1989, pp. 1–2.

[3]Jerry Hough, "The Politics of Successful Economic Reform," *Soviet Economy* (Washington, DC), January-March 1989, p. 12.

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tive-command methods to a new form of "political leadership" using methods of persuasion and consensus-building to carry out party policies.[4] Moreover, a significant amount of their powers was to be transferred to the soviets in their jurisdictions. They were urged to abandon their tutelage over the economic life of their regions and to implement limited economic reforms, which included a self-accounting system for enterprises, and landleasing and subcontracting in agriculture. In this connection, significant changes were made in the structure of the *obkom*. The center abolished the *obkom's* economic departments and transferred its functions to the executive committees of oblast soviets. The oblast party organization was to concentrate on ideological, political, and cadres work (*obkom* departments for these areas were retained). Such changes were to take place on the district and city levels as well.

The center mandated competitive elections for party secretaryships at the *obkom* level and below. In July 1989, the CPSU abolished the guidelines that had previously banned from public dissemination the reports of *obkom* activities.[5] Thereafter, party secretaries were to open up the decision-making process to the party rank and file. Party secretaries were also encouraged to engage in a constructive dialogue with informal social and political associations and to seek their cooperation in the solution of a variety of Soviet ecological and social problems.[6]

The new policy did not question the party's leading role in society. Nor did it affect the *nomenklatura* system. However, the new policy did threaten individuals who held key positions, because they either had to adapt to the new environment or face the prospect of losing their positions.

These modest recommendations generally puzzled the party secretaries. What does "political leadership" mean? Is it possible to withdraw from a commanding position in the economy and still retain political leadership? How can a dialogue be carried out with informal associations when some of them shout: "Down with the 'partocracy'"?

In principle, the *obkom* secretaries and their subordinates on the district and city levels were accustomed to the idea of implementing instructions coming from the top, even if the latest instructions ran counter to previous ones. This familiar approach was possible in agriculture, where the new policy was clear and possible to implement, despite the fact that it called for such new departures as landleasing, renting of equipment, and contractual relations.

Gorbachev's visit to Orel in the fall of 1988 was designed to demonstrate to the party apparatus that it could do much to improve the food supply, to revitalize the countryside, and to introduce new economic mechanisms in agriculture.[7] Implementing the new party line in the countryside did not threaten the leading role of the party secretary. He was asked to do different things, but he could still be the leader. Thus, many party secretaries began energetically to implement the new agrarian policy, which they perceived as yet another campaign, a new mobilization drive.

The party secretaries either ignored or distorted the intent of other new recommendations emanating from the center. For example, the economic departments of the *obkoms* were indeed dropped, only to be re-created as subdepartments of the remaining departments.[8] The *obkoms* had no desire to withdraw from their leading role in the local economy and continued to issue instructions, orders, and commands in the familiar fashion.

A second problem, reported a Soviet observer, was that the CPSU apparatus, the cadres that staffed city, district, and oblast committees, had been selected primarily to perform economic functions. By their very nature they were economic managers, and they simply did not understand what it meant to exercise "political leadership."[9] For example, at the Central Committee conference of republic, *kray,* and oblast first party secretaries in July 1989, A. Myakota, the first secretary of Poltava oblast, talked about disruptions in industrial production, failures of agricultural deliveries, and difficulties with finding the right kind of cadres.[10] Myakota's speech demonstrated that the sphere of his concerns had not changed; he was still "Governor-General" in charge of everything in the region.

Power has not yet been transferred from the party apparatus to the soviets. The party first secretaries argue that the soviets are not ready to take over the admin-

[4]"Party Leadership of the Economy," *Partiynaya Zhizn'* (Moscow), No. 21, November 1988, pp. 5–7.

[5]On this point, see "Why the Party Is Lagging Behind. A Conversation with L. A. Onikov, an Official of the Central Committee Apparatus," *Argumenty i Fakty*, No. 36, 1989, p. 12.

[6]For a discussion of the authorities' relations with the informal groups in Leningrad in 1989, see Yelena Zdravomyslova, "The Informals Demand," *Leningradskaya Panorama* (Leningrad), No. 8, August 1989, pp. 16–19.

[7]According to A. Myakota, the *obkom* first secretary of Poltava, "quite recently many villages were on the verge of dying out and the district was approaching the point of catastrophe in an economic, social, and demographic sense." See "The Revival of the Hopeful Among Us," *Partiynaya Zhizn'*, No. 19, October 1989, pp. 30–31.

[8]*Pravda* (Moscow), June 14, 1989. See also "Economic Reform and the Party Committee," *Partiynaya Zhizn'*, No. 19, October 1989, p. 7.

[9]*Pravda*, June 14, 1989.

[10]See Myakota's speech in ibid., July 21, 1989.

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istration of the cities and provinces.[11] *Pravda* complained in this regard:

At the present time, the absolute majority of party committees have not changed the methods of their work, and local soviets have no rights whatsoever in reality and are not ready to take power into their hands.[12]

Neither has the principle of competitive elections to party positions been implemented. To be sure, in the late 1980's, personnel turnover at the oblast level and below was quite high. From June 1987 to early 1988, 20 *obkom* secretaries were replaced, as were 500 chairmen of the party bureaus at the city and territory (*kray*) levels, 89,000 officials of local bureaus, and 20,500 secretaries of local party organizations.[13] However, of the 269 district- and city-level party secretaries recently chosen, only 6 percent were selected in multicandidate elections. Of the *obkom* secretaries, only seven (1 percent of the total) were chosen in this manner.[14] Data on personnel changes show that the replacement of *obkom* secretaries from above has continued. Thus, within a one-month span at the end of 1988, 10 *obkom* secretaries in the following jurisdictions lost their positions: Altay, Odessa, Vynnytsya, Sumy, Fergana, Bukhara, Pavlodar, Rybach'ye, Zaporizhya, and Alma Ata.[15] The high turnover of oblast secretaries and their subordinates in the late 1980's was achieved by direct involvement of the Central Committee Secretariat, not via a competitive election mechanism within the jurisdictions themselves.

The party apparatus also violated the new party line on positive engagement with independent social and political organizations. The apparatus used the center's recommendation to strengthen cadres and ideological work as a justification to engage in the aggressive defense of its prerogatives against the informal groups. During the election campaigns to the Congress of People's Deputies in the spring of 1989, the party secretaries attempted to assert their control over social and political developments. They arbitrarily dismissed editors of unruly newspapers, breached electoral law by packing district selection committees, disenfranchised independent candidates, attacked and suppressed informal associations, and harassed and banned political demonstrations and other expressions of popular discontent.[16] In Sverdlovsk oblast, for example, a judge, L. Kudrin, dropped charges against organizers of an unsanctioned rally. Party officials tried to pressure Kudrin to pursue the case. The judge resisted, and he resigned both his judgeship and his membership in the party rather than submit to *obkom* pressure. His courageous stance helped him to be elected a people's deputy.[17]

Soviet journalist Ivan Podsvirov wrote that *Pravda* received many letters from all over the country complaining that party functionaries were "making short shrift" (*raspravlyayutsya*) of their critics. Party *apparatchiki* fired their opponents from their jobs and even initiated criminal proceedings. These actions created a wave of popular hostility against the party, the "partocracy," and the so-called "party-untouchables." Podsvirov argued that the source of the problem lay in the party's unaccountability to society. Because the party was not responsible to the people, popular indignation was on the rise.[18] This popular indignation found expression in the spread of informal political associations, election committees, and popular fronts for *perestroyka* across the country to resist what were perceived as the "machinations" of the party apparatus.[19]

In 1989, party officials answered a resounding "No" to the center's modest recommendations to restructure their role and implement new policies. They attempted to hold on to their positions as masters of their jurisdictions, using the old command-administrative methods to implement instructions from above. On the one hand, one part of the party had begun the reform process; on the other, another part of the party was resisting it. Soviet observers themselves commented on this contradiction.[20] The fact is that it was not the party apparatus but Gorbachev who initiated the reform from above. The party apparatus is doing everything it can to sabotage the reform, and it is not surprising that it is winding up as the major obstacle to the reform effort.

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[11]A growing body of literature is appearing on this subject. One of the most interesting discussions took place in the Moscow Higher Party School in September 1989. Various speakers proposed the creation of an opposition to the CPSU or a multiparty system in an attempt to reconcile the existence of the party with the existence of the soviets. See *Partiya i Perestroyka. Materialy diskussionnogo kluba Moskovskoy Vysshey Partiynoy Shkoly "Politika"* (The Party and *Perestroyka*. Materials of a Discussion Club of the Moscow Higher Party School "Politika"), Moscow, 1989.

[12]*Pravda*, June 14, 1989.

[13]"The Democratization of Leadership Activity and the Internal Life of the Party," *Partiynaya Zhizn'*, No. 22, November 1988, p. 8.

[14]*Pravda*, July 10, 1989.

[15]These data are in ibid., Oct. 23, Nov. 5, and Nov. 6, 1988.

[16]For a detailed discussion of the elections, see Vladimir Brovkin, "The Making of Elections to the Congress of People's Deputies," *The Russian Review* (Cambridge, MA), forthcoming in 1990.

[17]*Pravda*, July 15, 1989.

[18]Ibid., July 4, 1989.

[19]For a detailed discussion, see Vladimir Brovkin, "Revolution from Below. Informal Political Associations in Russia, 1988–1989," *Soviet Studies* (Glasgow), forthcoming in 1990.

[20]"Why the Party is Lagging Behind," loc. cit.

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The Role of Corruption

Although the single most important source of resistance to reform among the party secretaries is their fear of losing their *raison d'être* as movers and shakers of the economy, widespread corruption also encourages attempts to block *perestroyka*. Some Soviet studies show that in recent years one out of every two economic crimes involved an illegal connection among the party, law enforcement agencies, and the underground economy. Bribes and kick-backs made up the bulk of this corruption.[21]

The involvement of the local party apparatus in the underground economy and organized crime is often regarded as most prevalent in Central Asia and the Caucasus. But the extent to which corruption affects regional and local centers of power elsewhere is often underestimated. Boris Yel'tsin's frank description of corruption in the Moscow city party organization sheds some light on this problem:

Question: What mistakes did you make when you were the first secretary of the Moscow city party committee? Answer: I underestimated the influence of the organized mafia in Moscow in all spheres. As soon as we touched the trade organizations, the food services, police, and the KGB, everything went into motion. And all of them are interconnected to a large degree. You get bogged down pulling out thread after thread. This was perhaps the main mistake. At that time in the trade sector alone, 2,000 people were arrested. In the police apparatus, we replaced the main directorate. In food services, it was also replaced. The leadership of the KGB—also replaced.[22]

The party apparatus retains control of profitable jobs, scarce housing, and other privileges—providing fertile ground for the growth of corruption. For example, a report from Novorossiysk described the son of a high-ranking party official who illegally obtained a job connected with foreign travel. Attempts to publicize this misdeed were suppressed by judges, the press, and the police, who were all connected with the local power-holders.[23]

As long as a non-elected group has the power to distribute jobs, apartments, and other privileges, corruption is inevitable. The party apparatus resists political competition from informal associations, which, by entering the political arena, could threaten its hold on the levers of corruption. Moreover, the pervasiveness of corruption leads the party apparatus to block the introduction of market mechanisms into the economy, both because the market promises to increase the availability of the scarce resources over which the party now has sole control and because the market generally accords privileges to people in relation to their achievements or abilities, not political connections. The apparatus's vested interest lies in perpetuating shortages and centralized controlled distribution, upon which its power is based.

"Negative" Trends

The elections to the Congress of People's Deputies in the spring of 1989 marked the beginning of a new political era in the Soviet Union. The party suffered a crushing defeat in the elections, as 38 *obkom* secretaries were defeated and a number of high-ranking party officials lost races in all of the country's major cities.[24] The Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet on the one hand, and the countless informal associations, popular fronts, independent unions, and strike committees on the other, competed with the party for power. In significant instances, they, rather than the party, have been able to set the political agenda.

The party secretaries greeted this new era with shock and panic. They were shocked by the resounding defeat of so many of their colleagues in the elections. They panicked because the socio-political trends they were witnessing brought into question the party's ability to remain in power. Party secretaries now focused on the future of the Union and of the CPSU; the party's role in the new structure of central government, local soviets, and the economy; and the party's relations with the media and the informal political organizations.

Decline in central party authority. The emergence of the Congress of People's Deputies and the Supreme Soviet as factors in Soviet politics raised the question of

[21]Larisa Kislinskaya, a TASS correspondent, in a lecture on November 14, 1989, entitled "Crime, Police, and Soviet Society" at the Kennan Institute for Advanced Russian Studies (Washington, DC). On allegations of corruption in the Central Committee and party-state apparatus, see *Pravda*, Dec. 24, 1989, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), Dec. 28, 1989, pp. 39–44; Moscow Television Service in Russian, Dec. 23, 1989, trans. in ibid., pp. 44–47.

[22]"The Position of Our Candidate," *Propeller* (Moscow), No. 15, 1989, p. 4.

[23]*Pravda*, June 14, 1989.

[24]Despite this evidence, Jerry Hough thinks that the defeat of party leaders did not mean that people voted against the CPSU. See Hough, loc. cit., p. 39.

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the relationship of the Central Committee and the Politburo to the Supreme Soviet. Under the old system, a Central Committee resolution was guaranteed unanimous ratification by the legislature. Premier Nikolay Ryzhkov described the new situation very bluntly at the Central Committee conference of republic, *kray*, and oblast first party secretaries in July 1989, when he stated that the legislature was not going to be bound by the conference's resolutions. The functions that had earlier been fulfilled by the Central Committee and the Politburo are becoming unclear, Ryzhkov said. Moreover, Ryzhkov warned the party that "Article 6 of the Constitution may be changed in such a way that the role of the party will be reduced to nothing by the legislature."[25] The question is, said Ryzhkov, whether the CPSU would remain a vanguard or become one of many political organizations in a multiparty system.[26]

In the new political conditions, society is ignoring Central Committee resolutions. For example, the August 26, 1989, Central Committee declaration "On the Situation in the Republics of the Soviet Baltic"[27] failed to dissuade popular fronts in Latvia, Lithuania, and Estonia from pressing their demands for Baltic independence. Central Committee resolutions on the media have no effect on newspapers and periodicals, which often ignore them.

In veiled form, speaker after speaker at the July conference asked this question: What was Gorbachev doing to the CPSU? They implied that the General Secretary was undermining the role of the party. For his part, Yegor Ligachev characterized this situation as one of "dual power" (*dvoyevlastiye*), thus calling to mind the revolutionary situation in 1917 when the soviets of workers' and soldiers' deputies competed with the Provisional Government for power.[28]

Creating dual power. Of great concern to the party first secretaries are the elections to the local soviets taking place across the country from December 1989 to June 1990. They fear that unless something is quickly done, the party will lose the elections to the popular fronts and other informal associations. The new soviets on the oblast level and below may then ignore the directives of their respective party committees, which would mean a further loss of political power for the party.

In some provincial party organizations, a mood of gloom has set in because the loss of elections is perceived as inevitable. In Khabarovsk, party officials were reported as saying, "What is the point in trying, we won't be elected anyway."[29] At an oblast party conference in the Ukrainian city of Zaporizhya, party officials stated plainly that "one more election campaign in local soviets and only those who criticize will remain."[30] In Lviv, the party apparatus is quite aware that it may lose the elections, so it portrays them as a "seizure of power" by the informal groups, calling on true communists to be vigilant.[31]

Ryzhkov acknowledged at the Central Committee conference in July that more and more frequently one hears the political slogan "Soviets without Communists."[32] The fact that many leaders of the informal associations are also CPSU members does not offer solace to the party apparatus. According to Ryzhkov, these people are the wrong kind of communists, for they advocate a multiparty system. What matters to the party officials is that they as individuals, and their apparatus, may lose power. Even reform-minded party secretaries share this concern.

Thus, more and more often the party secretaries are asking: "Are we going in the right direction?" "Is *perestroyka* really necessary?" "Is it not better to return to the old, tried and true system?" Some even prophesy the coming of total chaos and civil war.[33]

Economic disintegration. The views of the party secretaries on the economy are less homogeneous. Yet, even reform-minded party secretaries are not ready to abandon what they believe to be the key tenets of a socialist economy. They oppose private enterprise and the legalization of private property.

Supporters of economic reform constitute a minority among the party secretaries. The majority has criticized even the modest changes attempted thus far. From the point of view of the party leaders of Khabarovsk, for example, under *perestroyka*, people still blame the party organization for everything that goes wrong, although the reform has deprived the party of any power to implement measures to improve the economy. Another party official said that in the old times if the plan had not been fulfilled, he would summon the director of an enterprise and threaten him with a party reprimand, which

[25]Nikolay I. Ryzhkov's speech, in *Pravda*, July 21, 1989.

[26]At the discussion in the Moscow Higher Party School on the role of the party, one speaker, N. M. Blinov, said that sociological surveys concurred with Ryzhkov, showing that the CPSU could not win free elections if they were held today. See Blinov's speech in *Partiya i Perestroyka. . . .* pp. 75–76.

[27]*Pravda*, Aug. 27, 1989.

[28]Ligachev's speech at the July conference, in ibid., July 21, 1989.

[29]Ibid., Aug. 26, 1989.

[30]Ibid., Aug. 5, 1989.

[31]*Pravda*, Oct. 10, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 13, 1989, p. 71.

[32]Ryzhkov's speech in *Pravda*, July 21, 1989.

[33]Mikhail Gorbachev referred to such concerns in his speech, in ibid., Sept. 10, 1989.

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would suffice to get things done. Nowadays, the threat of a reprimand impresses nobody. Even worse from his point of view, the party apparatus is not even supposed to interfere in the economy.[34] Old structures have been weakened, but new ones have not yet been created. This rationalization, which is echoed at many oblast meetings, suggests that *perestroyka,* not the party apparatus, is responsible for the worsening economic situation.

Ideological capitulation. Ideological de-Stalinization has led to an unexpected result—the undermining of the credibility of Marxism-Leninism as a whole and even of socialism as such. The increasing irrelevance of ideology to the Soviet citizenry has a number of implications that deeply concern the party first secretaries. *Obkom* First Secretary L. F. Bobykin of Sverdlovsk complained at the July Central Committee conference that "we do not see a firm line in ideology."[35] Other party officials were more explicit. For example, A. Panchenko, the chairman of the Khabarovsk city soviet, stated that "all that we have been creating for years is falling apart."[36]

For many party officials, ideological disintegration and the blackening of Soviet history go hand in hand. It irritates them that all of Soviet history is presented as an uninterrupted chain of crimes and mistakes. V. Petrichenko of the Azov district party committee complained bitterly that "the party is being disarmed ideologically. Dirt has been heaped on everything."[37] *Obkom* First Secretary G. Kharchenko and Second Secretary A. Prichkin of Zaporizhya sounded similar themes when they argued that "it is necessary to remove from the political lexicon the term 'era of stagnation.' It is necessary to defend the party apparatus."[38] In another setting, Communist Party of Ukraine Politburo member Valentyna Shevchenko put it this way: "How is it possible to remain aloof when before your very eyes the interests of our entire socialist fatherland are enroached upon, when people raise their hand against our most sacred gains?"[39]

In the freer political atmosphere of the late 1980's, the army has also come in for its share of criticism from reformers. In response, Yegor Ligachev adamantly condemned attacks on the Soviet Army, and castigated "subversive" attempts to "pull it apart into national homelands."[40] The party officials favor firm commitment to a strong defense because capitalist countries and NATO remain the chief adversary of world socialism. For those who think of themselves as true communists, current ideological trends are tantamount to a betrayal of the communist cause.

Informal agents of capitalism. Many party officials see the causes of the current crisis of the party in the activity of anti-socialist forces. *Pravda* neatly summarized this outlook: "Everybody is to blame: the press, the informals, television, *Little Vera,* and rock groups. Everybody, except ourselves."[41]

Politburo member Lev Zaykov accused the informal associations of "doing everything in their power to discredit the party."[42] Demagogues and inciters abound. As A. F. Ponomarev, the first secretary of the Belgorod *obkom,* complained at the July conference, "with the help of rallies, strikes, and demonstrations some people are striving to put pressure on the party, soviet, and economic leaders. They propagate hostility to the party among the population."[43]

Ya. P. Pohrebnyak, the first secretary of the Lviv *obkom,* accused the informals of capitalizing on temporary difficulties: "Destructive criticism is gaining strength, sharp attacks on the party and on socialism take place. They speculate on the problems of ethnic relations and religion."[44] Similarly, V. K. Mesyats, the first secretary of the Moscow *obkom,* believes extremists are to blame:

Groups of all kinds have surfaced, armed with revolutionary demagoguery. They are striving to create tension. An atmosphere of instability reigns. They want to put the blame for all difficulties on the leading organs. . . . Why do we not give them a rebuff?[45]

The party secretaries are terrified by calls for a multiparty system. Speaking as a defender of the apparatus, Ligachev argued that a multiparty system would entail the dissolution of the Soviet federation. Only the CPSU, he argued, can guarantee the unity of the country.[46] Others warn that legalization of popular fronts could lead to the disintegration of the Union. In the words of

[34]Ibid., Aug. 26, 1989.
[35]L. F. Bobykin's speech at the Central Committee conference in July, in ibid., July 21, 1989.
[36]Ibid., Aug. 26, 1989.
[37]Ibid., Aug. 5, 1989.
[38]Ibid.
[39]*Pravda Ukrainy* (Kiev), Sept. 2, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV,* Oct. 3, 1989, p. 69.
[40]Ligachev's speech at the Central Committee conference, in *Pravda,* July 21, 1989.
[41]Ibid., July 18, 1989.
[42]L. N. Zaykov's speech at the Central Committee conference, in ibid., July 21, 1989.
[43]In ibid.
[44]In ibid.
[45]In ibid.
[46]In ibid.

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Communist Party of Ukraine Politburo member Shevchenko, the party must "stay the hand of anyone who would lift it against our system, our state, or the integrity of our great Soviet Union."[47]

In some cities, party officials have tried to link a rise in crime to the proliferation of informal associations.[48] In others, they simply ruled out political dialogue with the informals because such dialogue would entail dealing with their "enemies." A party official in Lviv explained:

And on what basis are we supposed to conduct a dialogue? Are we supposed to accept the demand that the party quit political life, that the USSR be partitioned, that capitalism be restored, and that Ukraine be dismembered?[49]

Separatist tendencies in the union republics. Of great concern to the party secretaries are the recent developments in several republics, particularly in Lithuania, Latvia, and Estonia. At the Central Committee plenum on nationalities in September, A. A. Vlasenko, the first secretary of Smolensk *obkom,* spoke of a threat to the unity of the state. He criticized the national egotism of some minorities and their discrimination against Russians, demanding that "the Russian language be enshrined in the constitution as the state language throughout the territory of the USSR."[50]

In December 1989, the Communist Party of Lithuania (CPL) separated itself from the CPSU, abrogating the all-Union Central Committee's right to dictate policy to it.[51] Electoral politics and a desire to survive pushed Lithuanian party leaders to advocate their republic's autonomy and subsequently its independence. If the CPL succeeds in its efforts, the communist parties of other Baltic republics as well as that of Azerbaijan can be expected to follow suit.[52]

Conservative party officials in Lithuania—mainly Russians—have responded to the efforts of the CPL leadership by arguing that the leadership of the CPL has been seized by enemies. In effect, much of the conservatives' base of support is in Moscow, not in Lithuania. They understand that their own standing in the party and their privileged position in the republic are linked to the Lithuanian republic's continued membership in the Union.

Although Lithuania is somewhat further along the road to independence than either Latvia or Estonia, conflict between indigenous nationals and Russians also characterizes the communist parties of the latter two republics.[53] No doubt this conflict will intensify as Latvia and Estonia move toward secession from the USSR. In fact, national conflict within the party apparatus of these two republics could be worse than in Lithuania because Russians make up a much larger share of these two republics' populations.

The prospect of the disintegration of the CPSU along national lines fills the party secretaries with apprehension and fear. Everything seemed to be so simple and orderly in the good old days, when factories were producing, dissidents were held in check, the people obeyed,[54] and small republics did not dare question the wisdom of Moscow. A party secretary perceives as disorder the principle that journals can publish what they want, that workers can stop work and go on strike, and that elements perceived as openly hostile to socialism can question the party's leading role. He perceives as chaos the pluralism that is characteristic of modern society.

The world view of the party secretaries is profoundly conservative, and must invariably generate a desire for what a party secretary would call order or a strong hand, that is, a dictatorship. Party secretaries' descriptions of recent political trends in the Soviet Union suggest that they do not comprehend that what they are witnessing are not the intrigues of troublemakers and demagogues, but the revolution of an awakened society.

Proposed Remedies

The party secretaries have not yet assembled their ideas into a coherent platform. Partly they have not done so because they are not accustomed to acting independently. As *Pravda* commented, "a considerable part of the party apparatus finds itself in total bewilderment. It cannot orient itself to the new situation."[55] The instincts, behavior patterns, and training of the party

[47]*Pravda Ukrainy*, Sept. 2, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 3, 1989, p. 70. See also *Izvestiya* (Moscow), Sept. 11, 1989, trans. in *Current Digest of the Soviet Press* (Columbus, OH), Oct. 11, 1989, pp. 1–5.

[48]*Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), Sept. 12, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 28, 1989, p. 67.

[49]*Pravda*, Oct. 10, 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 13, 1989, p. 71.

[50]*Pravda*, Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in ibid., Sept. 25, 1989, p. 67.

[51]Moscow TASS in English, Dec. 20, 1989, in ibid., Dec. 21, 1989, p. 62.

[52]See the argument for the desirability of such a scenario in Latvian Domestic Service in Latvian, Aug. 30, 1989, trans. in ibid., Sept. 7, 1989, p. 50.

[53]See Juris Dreifelds, "Latvian National Rebirth," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), July-August 1989, pp. 77–94; and Rein Taagepera, "Estonia's Road to Independence," ibid., November-December 1989, pp. 11–26.

[54]*Pravda Ukrainy*, Sept. 2, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 3, 1989, p. 78.

[55]*Pravda*, June 14, 1989.

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apparatus have conditioned it always to fulfill instructions from above.[56]

As a group, the party secretaries do not have solutions to the problems facing the USSR. They do not know how to overcome the increasing technological gap with the West. They do not know how to resolve chronic shortages in the food supply. Many of them understand that the centralized system concentrated too much power in the ministries, which had exploited "their" provinces. But confusion reigns among the party secretaries on how to decentralize the economy. On the one hand, they admit that some restructuring is necessary; on the other, they are adamantly opposed to private enterprise and capitalism. Yet, out of fear for their own survival, they have recently begun to express some ideas on how to remedy the country's current ills.

Regaining control over the party. Certain themes are becoming more and more pronounced in the speeches of the party secretaries. The principal theme is that the party must reimpose control, and that it should begin by halting the arbitrary rule of the center over the party itself. For example, oblast first secretaries want to end the arbitrary dismissals of party officials by the center. In a veiled fashion, Vlasenko, the Smolensk first party secretary, criticized Gorbachev for his unilateral dismissals of several Politburo members. He argued that the party congress alone can elect the Politburo. Now that the dates for the 28th Party Congress have been set, said Vlasenko, such actions should not be repeated.[57]

Yafrem Sakalow (Sokolov), the first secretary of the Communist Party of Belorussia (CPB), went even further. He challenged Moscow's right to control appointments in the republics and oblasts and, indirectly, Gorbachev's control over the party apparatus when he asked, "Why, for example, can a republic or oblast party organization not be trusted to decide for itself whom to elect as members of the [republic] Central Committee or *obkom*?"[58]

Direct and public criticism of Gorbachev appears more and more often. For example, in what amounted to an attack on Gorbachev, a proposal was put forward at the July conference of party republic, *kray,* and oblast first secretaries to restore the post of the second secretary, or to abolish the post of the General Secretary and increase the input of collective leadership.[59] V. Petrenko, of the Azov district committee, claimed at a party conference in Zaporizhya that workers no longer believed Gorbachev; and A. Prichkin, the second *obkom* secretary of Zaporizhya, maintained that Gorbachev had lost his sense of reality. The Zaporizhya conference warned the Central Committee that it risked losing the support of local organizations.[60]

Perhaps the sharpest attack on Gorbachev to date came from the Leningrad party organization, which has long had a reputation of being one of the most conservative in the country. The ouster of Yuriy Solov'yev and the appointment of Boris Gidaspov have changed little in this regard. At a party rally following the city party plenum in November 1989, speaker after speaker attacked the Central Committee, the Politburo, and, by implication, Gorbachev himself. According to one of the speakers, "the Central Committee in its present composition has lost its authority in the party and with the people. It is incapable of leading *perestroyka*."[61] Such banners as "Return to Our Values" and "Politburo to Account" appeared at the meeting. The rally demanded the direct election of the Central Committee and the immediate convocation of an extraordinary party congress to address the crisis in the CPSU.[62]

Their desire to retain control over the party also leads the party secretaries to oppose (and on this point, Gorbachev is with them) the "federalization" of the CPSU.[63] At the same time, however, party secretaries in the Russian republic (RSFSR) intend to create a communist party of the republic with its own central committee.[64] All indications are that the conservative *obkom* secretaries would make up a majority in an RSFSR Central Committee. A Russian party together with its central committee could become a powerful political organ distinct from the CPSU and its Central Committee, which are losing their power and authority (not without Gorbachev's connivance).

Safeguarding communist ideology. In an effort to reestablish the supremacy of Marxist-Leninist ideology, party secretaries have interpreted the new emphasis on political leadership as a license to strengthen the party's control over ideology. In the words of L. F. Bobykin, the first secretary of the Sverdlovsk *obkom,* "it is time to draw the line between a healthy pluralism of opinion and the propaganda of alien ideology."[65]

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[56]For a discussion of the weakness in democratic thinking in the Soviet Communist Party, see N. Feliforov, "Do Not Declare but Guarantee Collectivity in Work," *Partiynaya Zhizn'*, No. 19, October 1989, p. 15.

[57]*Pravda*, Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 25, 1989, p. 68.

[58]*Pravda*, Jan. 2, 1990.

[59]Bobykin's speech, in ibid., July 21, 1989.

[60]Ibid., Aug. 5, 1989.

[61]*Izvestiya*, Nov. 25, 1989.

[62]Ibid., Dec. 11, 1989.

[63]*Pravda*, Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 25, 1989, p. 82.

[64]Vlasenko, the Smolensk *obkom* first secretary, came out with this proposal at the September 1989 Central Committee plenum on nationalities. See *Pravda*, Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in ibid., Sept. 25, 1989, p. 68.

[65]L. F. Bobykin's speech at the Central Committee conference, in *Pravda*, July 21, 1989. Bobykin was one of those first secretaries who failed to be elected to the Congress of People's Deputies. See ibid., July 15, 1989.

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Pravda went even further. Referring to readers' letters said to express the toiling masses' indignation against the "anti-Soviet propaganda" sweeping the country, it called for a party offensive on the ideological front. Firing the first shots in the offensive, *Pravda* linked the informal groups to foreign masters who financed anti-Soviet groups inside the USSR.[66] Perhaps taking his cue from *Pravda,* a party official from Lviv demanded an outright ban on "anti-Soviet" organizations:

I think the adoption of a law on informal associations will put many things in their proper place. It must stipulate with utmost clarity which of them can operate within the system of a law-based socialist state and which friends of the people we must part company with.[67]

Other CPSU officials insist that the party must reassert the dominance of Marxist-Leninist ideology in Soviet society. In so doing, the *apparatchiki* call upon the party to fulfill its historic mission as defined by Lenin. Thus, the supposedly pro-Gorbachev reformist Yu. A. Manayenkov, first secretary of the Lipetsk *obkom,* demanded that party control be imposed on the press.[68] It is essential, agreed Ligachev at the July Central Committee conference, to take concrete steps to ensure that the press shapes public opinion under the direction of the party.[69]

Officials insist that the CPSU Program remains in force, and that it aims to build communism, not capitalism. Thus, those who advocate private enterprise should be excluded from membership in the party, and the party must purge members (such as the historian Yuriy Afanas'yev), who have come out for private enterprise and a multiparty system.[70]

Preserving the party's leading role. The party secretaries are striving to regain control over the economy and roll back structural changes in the party's economic apparatus in their jurisdictions. Bobykin, for one, averred that the liquidation of *obkom* economic departments was premature.[71] Party officials more and more often maintain that the Soviet economy cannot function without the unifying role of the party. Thus, Yafrem Sakalow, the first secretary of the CPB, argued that the economic decentralization led to group egotism in the enterprises and that it was the role of the party to harmonize conflicting interests: "I call it the directive-economic method, that is, combining democratic discussion, economic accountability, and conscious executive discipline."[72]

The legalization of private property would lead to a diminution of the role of the party apparatus in the economy. Hence, at the Leningrad oblast party plenum in November 1989, one party secretary after another attacked the legalization of private property and private enterprise. They equated private property with the restoration of capitalism and swore to fight it to the end. In the words of N. N. Koroblev, the first secretary of the Vasileostrovskiy *raykom:*

Proposals are being made to turn a considerable share of the means of production, including land, over to collective and private ownership, that is, to take the path of de-nationalization. The realization of these proposals could prove fatal for socialism in the USSR.[73]

The party secretaries are also thinking of ways to retain control over the soviets. As Ligachev said at the July conference:

The strengthening of the role of soviets in society can only take place in conditions of the strengthening of the party, and not at the expense of its weakening, as some suggest. It is inadmissible to put the party under the control of the soviets.[74]

The party apparatus would like to try to make elections meaningless by reasserting party control over the new soviets, no matter who happens to be elected. Outlines of a comparable approach are apparent in the proposal to ban so-called anti-Soviet and anti-socialist groupings and to strengthen the army. In the words of Valentyna Shevchenko:

What is needed is political vigilance, intolerance of the forces that have galvanized themselves and are not only not hiding their hostility toward socialism and pitting themselves against the CPSU, but on the contrary are making a show of it and advocating the idea

[66]Ibid., Aug. 26, 1989.
[67]*Pravda,* Oct. 10, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV,* Oct. 13, 1989, p. 71.
[68]Yu. A. Manayenkov's speech at the Central Committee conference, in *Pravda,* July 21, 1989.
[69]Ibid.
[70]V. M. Mishin's speech at the September 1989 Central Committee plenum on nationalities, in *Pravda,* Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV,* Sept. 25, 1989, p. 82. On threats to expel Yuriy Afanas'yev, see *Le Quotidien de Paris,* Nov. 9, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 16, 1989, p. 93.
[71]Bobykin's speech at the Central Committee conference, in *Pravda,* July 21, 1989.
[72]Ibid., Jan. 2, 1989.
[73]*Leningradskaya Pravda* (Leningrad), Nov. 23, 1989.
[74]Ligachev's speech at the Central Committee conference, in *Pravda,* July 21, 1989.

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General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev talks on February 8, 1990, with first secretaries of city and district party committees and of primary party organizations who participated in the February 1990 CPSU Central Committee plenum.

—TASS from Sovfoto.

of creating other political structures as an alternative to the party. . . . The easiest way out, of course, is to address oneself to the appropriate organs and ask them to restore order.[75]

Finally, proposals appear more frequently to make membership in the CPSU incompatible with favoring secession from the Soviet Union.[76] Implementation of this kind of measure would make it possible to purge communist parties in the Baltic republics and in the Caucasus of the majority of their members.

Gorbachev's response. The conservatives' program is really not new. Briefly stated, it is to hold on to what remains in their hands and to take back what has been lost. Probably under the impact of such grave opposition, Gorbachev's approach to the party has been full of contradictions.[77] He has argued that power should pass over to the soviets, but he reiterated that the leading role of the CPSU should not be abandoned. The party secretaries should not interfere in the economy, but the party should never abandon leadership of the economy. *Glasnost'* is good, but the party should exercise leadership over the press. Gorbachev encourages cooperation with voluntary political associations, but he states that attacks on socialism should not be tolerated. The only way to explain these inconsistencies is to suggest that Gorbachev has been trying to position himself as an irreplaceable, unifying figure in the party, one who can talk to both the party apparatus and the reformers. As such, he is attempting to contain the forces of disintegration that he himself has unleashed. However, it is unlikely that he can lead both the reformers and the party apparatus for very long.[78]

Gorbachev's answer to the concerns of the party secretaries meets them halfway by calling for the retention of many bureaucratic features that are a product of an earlier period in Soviet history. But the remedies that rely on administrative measures are anything but solutions to the country's problems. The party secretaries cannot mobilize the propaganda apparatus to reimpose Marxist-Leninist ideology on society because that ideology has lost all credibility in a country characterized by permanent shortages, rising national assertiveness, and the information revolution prompted by

[75]*Pravda Ukrainy*, Sept. 2, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 3, 1989, p. 70.

[76]USSR Minister of Internal Affairs V. V. Bakatin at the September 1989 Central Committee plenum on nationalities, in *Pravda*, Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in ibid., Sept. 25, 1989, p. 79.

[77]See Gorbachev's speech to the Central Committee conference, in *Pravda*, July 21, 1989.

[78]Yuriy Afanas'yev expressed this doubt in his speech at a July meeting of the Interregional Group of People's Deputies. See *Atmoda* (Riga), Aug. 21, 1989.

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glasnost'. If the party apparatus reverts to censorship, people will stop buying official publications and the same information will flow into *samizdat*. A conservative purge of the party could be undertaken, but it would lead to an overwhelming defeat for the CPSU in the elections. Campaigns on the food-supply front, the ideological front, or the transport front will not improve the situation in the long run—they have been tried before with no permanent success. Ultimately, the basic problem faced by the party secretaries is that they know only how to use administrative measures to attack problems. In fact, the real solution to the problems facing the Soviet Union lies not in bureaucratic action, but in more freedom for all kinds of independent economic, social, and political activity, and a consequent diminution of the party's power and authority.

How to Survive?

Thus far, we have surveyed the party secretaries' interpretation of various trends in the USSR, as well as their preferred remedies for the country's ills. The question to consider now is how the party secretaries can achieve their objectives. Party officials observing Gorbachev's moves in 1989 could not fail to notice that he continued to exercise firm control over the appointment of *obkom* secretaries. Dismissals, retirements, and replacements continued. *Obkom* secretaries dismissed in Leningrad, Kiev, Moscow, and Chelyabinsk were conservatives who had lost elections in March.[79] By contrast, *obkom* secretaries promoted in Orel and Lipetsk had economic successes in their jurisdictions and did not lose elections.[80] The obvious lesson to draw from this record is that in order to stay in power it is necessary to improve the economy and win popular support. However, improving the economy and winning popular support do not necessarily mean a shift in the allegiance of the party apparatus to *perestroyka* and reform.

Most secretaries at the *obkom* level and below, it seems, do not know how to act in a pluralist political setting. Their work continues to revolve around producing reports, holding meetings, and issuing instructions. They set targets for production, appoint cadres, dismiss outspoken editors, and harass informal groups.[81]

At the plenum of the Moscow party organization after elections to the Congress of People's Deputies, many speakers admitted that party officials were no match for the speakers of the informal associations. The informals were reported as being more popular than the party in Novosibirsk, Leningrad, Lviv, and many other cities.[82] One of the reasons for the party's lack of popularity, according to the party committee secretary of Moscow University, was that the party no longer had a comprehensive ideology. Party officials do not know how to respond to charges that the party has detached itself from the people, that it has become elitist, and that Marxism-Leninism is no longer relevant. They do not know what to say to a claim that democratic capitalism is a better system than Marxist-Leninist socialism. The ideology provides no guidelines for responses to these challenges, evidence that the party and its ideology are in crisis.[83] According to Politburo member Lev Zaykov, more and more people are leaving the party and fewer and fewer are entering it.[84] The standing of a communist in society is the lowest it has ever been. Many public opinion polls convincingly show that Soviet public opinion today is profoundly anti-communist.[85]

How can the communists survive in this new political environment? Indications are that party secretaries are beginning to exploit two possible means of self-preservation. One is an attempt to identify the party with the defense of nationalist interests.[86] A second is to lead a workers' opposition to *perestroyka*.[87]

Party officials' support for nationalist aspirations has taken a variety of forms in various republics. In Lithuania, Estonia, and Latvia, party officials aver that on fundamental questions they have no disagreements with the popular fronts. They have turned into enthusiasts for autonomy and democracy, competing in this regard with the popular fronts.

In the Caucasus and Moldavia, the republic communist parties also have been identifying themselves with national aspirations and reform, although in both cases conservatives remain in power. In Central Asia, although republic party organizations remain firmly tied to the underground economy and organized crime,[88] they have begun to encourage nationalist sentiment in an effort to generate popular support. Corrupt and conservative as they may be, they have embraced the quest for republic autonomy and the revival of national languages and cultures.

In the RSFSR, the party secretaries have also begun

[79]For a thorough discussion of personnel politics in 1989, see Hough, loc. cit.

[80]*Pravda*, Sept. 23 and 24, 1989.

[81]"Reforming the Party," *Moscow News*, No. 36, 1989, p. 5.

[82]*Pravda*, Sept. 13, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 6, 1989, p. 53.

[83]*Pravda*, June 24, 1989.

[84]Zaykov's speech in ibid., June 22, 1989.

[85]See *Izvestiya*, Dec. 8, 1989, and *Partiya i perestroyka*. . . , pp. 74–75.

[86]The Central Committee acknowledged that some elements of the party were moving toward "nationalist positions" in its appeal in *Pravda*, Aug. 4, 1989.

[87]Vladimir Shlapentokh in *The Washington Post*, Nov. 26, 1989.

[88]This is clearly suggested in *Pravda*, June 16, 1989.

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to identify themselves with Russian nationalism. In a curious example from Leningrad, the district party organization has coordinated its activity with the local leader of *Pamyat'*, A. Pyzhov, ostensibly in order to control him. Pyzhov and other speakers at a meeting sponsored by the Oktyabrskiy *raykom* in Leningrad praised *Pamyat'* and spoke on the "class essence of Zionism" in their talks. According to a Soviet journalist, "more than just one party secretary in Leningrad is in sympathy with Pyzhov and his lectures—many more."[89] Along the same line, in the Supreme Soviet, a grouping of party members sympathetic to Russian nationalism has recently agreed to coordinate their efforts.[90] This trend shows that in the process of attempting to garner popular support, the CPSU is disintegrating into a series of national parties. As important, no political tendency has yet emerged that appears capable of arresting this process.

Party secretaries are also beginning to exploit workers' dissatisfaction with *perestroyka*. For example, the Soviet public has exhibited widespread hostility toward the new private cooperatives, in part because of the very high incomes acquired by cooperative members.[91] In an interesting attempt to adapt to the age of mass politics in Krasnodar, the *obkom* secretary tried to gain popularity by smashing the cooperatives.[92]

Other party secretaries support the creation of workers' councils, and talk about the lost leading role of the proletariat. They would like to be seen as championing privileged representation of workers in the new soviets in the hope that they, as sponsors of these privileges, will be the workers' representatives, and thus become the vanguard of the proletariat once again. The party secretaries envisage an alliance between disgruntled workers and conservative party secretaries to be based on a simple quid pro quo. The workers would obtain job security and price stabilization, and the secretaries would retain political power.

The Leningrad party organization under Yuriy Solov'yev is reported to have been the architect of this approach,[93] helping to establish the so-called "Joint Front of Workers." If we examine the political rhetoric of this organization, it becomes clear that its angry tone, demands, and ultimatums are directed not against the party, but against liberal intellectuals, the authors of reform. A conference of the "Joint Front of Workers" in Leningrad accused Leonid Abalkin and Abel Aganbegyan of trying to restore capitalism.[94] Speakers demanded that the media be placed under the control of workers, called for a halt to the dissemination of "alien, bourgeois" ideas, and argued for the confiscation of the assets of rich cooperatives.[95]

The Leningrad party apparatus is attempting to appeal to such sentiment. Yu. Denisov, a secretary of the Leningrad *obkom*, assured the workers at one enterprise that the party would struggle against restoration of private enterprise.[96] At a city party plenum, another official concurred, arguing that "it would be especially dangerous if we allowed a reduction of the representation of the working class and the peasantry in the local soviet."[97]

The "Joint Front of Workers" has also promoted the idea of increasing the number of candidates for election to the local soviets from large factories, and called for all pre-election debates to be held on the premises of these plants. (The party had used this ploy to get some of its candidates elected to the Congress of People's Deputies.) In fact, the conservatives managed to ram through the Supreme Soviet of the RSFSR an electoral law whereby elections could be carried out at enterprises on an "experimental basis."[98]

The initiatives of the Leningrad party organization were soon embraced by threatened party secretaries in the Urals and Siberia. In September, they helped to sponsor a "United Front of Workers of Russia," which assembled in Sverdlovsk.[99]

The staunchly conservative party in Belorussia has also taken steps to line up support among the workers. At a September 1989 conference of representatives of labor collectives in Minsk, Sakalow, the first secretary of the CPB, attempted to convince his audience that only the party could defend the workers. He maintained that the "extremists" were trying to drive a wedge between the party and the working class:

That is political extremism. . . . Who is nurturing it? The same critics who, as parasites on glasnost' *and democracy, are organizing meetings and gatherings and doing everything to advertise themselves as leaders, fighters, and martyrs, champions of the*

[89] *Sovetskaya Kul'tura* (Moscow), trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 6, 1989, p. 63.
[90] See *The Washington Post*, Nov. 23, 1989.
[91] Anthony Jones and William Moskoff, "New Cooperatives in the USSR," *Problems of Communism*, November-December 1989, p. 33.
[92] "Down with Cooperatives," *Moscow News*, No. 39, 1989, p. 5.
[93] Vera Tolz, "Politics in Leningrad and the Creation of Two Popular Fronts," Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR*, July 21, 1989, pp. 38–40.
[94] *Izvestiya*, Dec. 8, 1989.
[95] A. Gorenkov, "We Ourselves Must Resolve the Urgent Problems," *Partiynaya Zhizn'*, No. 24, December 1989, p. 31.
[96] *Izvestiya*, Dec. 8, 1989.
[97] *Leningradskaya Pravda*, Nov. 23, 1989.
[98] Moscow TASS in English, in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 27, 1989, p. 51.
[99] Vera Tolz, "The United Front of Workers of Russia: Further Consolidation of Antireform Forces," Radio Liberty, *Report on the USSR*, Sept. 29, 1989, pp. 11–13.

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"people's welfare." And in order to be on display and to win glory as people of the utmost principle and justice, they concentrate their attacks on the heart of the people—the party.[100]

It is still too early to judge the potential strength of these new political trends. Thus far, the nationalist appeal has not gained much support in Russia, and the workers' anger has been directed primarily against the party secretaries. During the July strikes in Karaganda, miners would not let Communists speak but listened with rapt attention to every word of a leader of an informal group.[101] Nevertheless, party secretaries may be able to attract some categories of workers to their side.[102]

Some Gloomy Scenarios

In the late 1980's, party secretaries and the entire party-state apparatus on the city, district, and regional levels have been the major obstacle to reform in the Soviet Union (to be sure, party apparatuses in the Baltic republics are an exception). It is likely that this opposition will continue in the future. No replacement of personnel will change the fact that the leaders of the party apparatus as such have a vested interest in ensuring the survival of their institution, not in disbanding it. However, other factors will mitigate the party officials' opposition to reform. In large cities and provinces across the country (and in Russia and Ukraine in particular), officials will suffer crushing defeats in elections to regional and local soviets. Reformist popular fronts are likely to achieve tremendous gains, and probably even win a majority of seats in a number of local soviets, thus leading to a further deterioration in the party's power.

Reformist successes in the elections will in turn lead to a political crisis if the newly elected soviets refuse to carry out the instructions of their corresponding communist party committees. Thus, it is particularly ominous that the conservative party officials are beginning to talk about organizing so-called "Committees for the Defense of Soviet Power."[103] An open clash may break out in some places between hard-line "Soviet power committees" on the one side, and newly elected soviets and the popular fronts on the other. In some areas, however, party secretaries will survive if they manage to identify themselves with reform and democratization, or with populist, anti-capitalist, and nationalist sentiments.

After a crisis arising from the local elections, three scenarios are possible. In one scenario, rank-and-file party members may abolish the dictatorship of the apparatus in the process of electing delegates to the 28th Party Congress in 1990. Conservatives and reformers may then clash at the congress, and a formal split into two factions may occur.[104] One result would be a mass decline in CPSU membership. If the conservatives somehow manage to preserve Article 6 of the Constitution, which guarantees the party's leading role, the anti-reform wing of the party will continue to lose its authority and credibility. It could then vanish as a political force of any significance. In a second scenario, if the reformers are able to abolish Article 6 and institutionalize a multiparty system, reform elements of the CPSU may break away and form a social democratic party, as did party reformers in Hungary. In a third scenario, factional conflict between reformers and conservatives could burst out of control, thus leading to a coup d'état and civil war. However, if the conservatives are able to seize power in a coup, their rule likely will not last for any considerable period of time. A conservative dictatorship would almost certainly trigger the secession of several republics and serious disturbances in all large cities. The cost of pacifying what remains of the country for any extended period of time would be astronomical, especially given the Soviet Union's abysmal economic performance in the last decade.

Whatever scenario might materialize, the Leninist-Stalinist CPSU has outlived its usefulness and is ready to be consigned to the dustbin of history. Society itself, informal political organizations, and an incipient market economy are beginning to fulfill functions that had been performed by the party. Organizationally, the party has entered a stage of disintegration into national-republic parties in the Union republics, and reformist-democratic and nationalist-populist wings in Russia. Thus, the party secretaries as a political species face certain political extinction in the years ahead.

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[100] *Sovetskaya Belorussiya* (Minsk), Sept. 30, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 26, 1989, p. 51.

[101] A. Kitov, "Authoritarian Methods of Management Pushed the Workers to Strike," *Partiynaya Zhizn'*, Oct. 19, 1989, p. 59.

[102] See Elizabeth Teague, "*Perestroika:* Who Stands to Gain, Who Stands to Lose?" in Susan L. Clark, Ed., *Gorbachev's Agenda: Changes in Soviet Domestic and Foreign Policy*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1989, pp. 71–73.

[103] The first such committee was set up in Lithuania at an unidentified factory. Party activists gathered there claimed that Soviet power in Lithuania "could actually be declared illegal." They saw their task as defending Soviet power, but did not elaborate on what exactly they were going to do to preserve it. See *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, Sept. 10, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 28, 1989, pp. 71–73.

[104] The possibility of an open schism is discussed openly nowadays. See *Leningradskaya Pravda*, Nov. 23, 1989.

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Leadership by "Lines": China's Unresolved Succession

Ian Wilson and You Ji

The events of April and May 1989 in China, which led to the fall of Zhao Ziyang and the killings in June, underline yet again the inability of the Chinese political system to devise procedures for an orderly leadership succession. Ironically, the current situation is similar to that which faced Mao Zedong when first Liu Shaoqi and then Lin Biao failed to meet his expectations of them. Deng discarded Hu Yaobang and then Zhao Ziyang, only to select a relative unknown in Jiang Zemin at the eleventh hour, much as Mao finally settled on Hua Guofeng. Deng seemed to be aware that time was running out when he dubbed Jiang his successor. "Jiang must be the core of the third echelon (generation) leadership," he said,[1] a clear nomination never accorded to either Hu or Zhao Ziyang.

Yet the crisis of China's political system in 1989 is not simply a question of choosing a successor to an old leader. It has its origins in a range of institutional problems that, although sometimes masked by the very personal nature of political power in China, have been building to a head steadily since the death of Mao. These include political legitimacy, the structure of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP), the necessity for economic reform, and the role of the People's Liberation Army (PLA). Politics has revolved around these problems for at least two decades, but in 1989, a new factor, China's society itself, was introduced into political power considerations in an unprecedented way. Thus, regardless of how the succession problem is finally resolved, China's political system is unlikely to be quite the same as it was before this crisis.

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Leadership by "Lines"

Deng's inability to effect an orderly succession, like Mao's failure, has deep roots in the CCP's practice of leadership by "lines," whereby the top leadership group is divided into those of the "first line," who manage the day-to-day work of the party, including some policy formulation, and the "second-line" leaders, who are involved only in major issues of strategy and policy. The concept originated in part from Mao's concern over the succession issue in the early 1950's and in part as a result of the poor guidance he had provided during the Great Leap Forward.[2] After the "7000 Cadres" Conference in 1962, Liu Shaoqi was empowered to preside over the Politburo, and together with Deng Xiaoping, who headed the Secretariat, formed the first line. Mao retreated to the second line, supposedly to "foster the authority of others" in order that their takeover "not cause too much disruption to society." Similarly, in 1980, Deng retired from the front line by relinquishing

[1]Tao Xin, "China's Situation after the Fourth Plenum," *Kuang Chiao Ching* (Hong Kong), No. 7, 1989, p. 6.

[2]F. C. Teiwes, for one, has traced the concept of two-line leadership back to the early 1950's. See his forthcoming volume, *Politics at Mao's Court: Gao Gang and Party Factionalism in the Early 1950's*.

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his state post of first vice-premier and later all his party posts, save the chairmanship of the Central Military Commission (CMC), ostensibly to allow first Hu Yaobang and Zhao Ziyang and then Zhao and Li Peng to develop their own bases of support.

While this arrangement may have provided the front-line leaders with a degree of public exposure that might have eased their acceptance had they inherited power, it proved to have two grave flaws.[3] First, the paramount leaders, Mao and Deng, never really retired—they frequently intervened in policy-making and interfered in policy implementation. Second, the division created constant friction between those who did not hold specific party portfolios but enjoyed real authority, and those who were charged with the day-to-day party and government management but were not granted sufficient power to meet their responsibilities. The first-liners found it difficult to please the powerful figures in the second line. At the same time, they saw themselves as operating in the shadow of the elders and resented the need to submit their work for scrutiny, approval, or possible veto.

The arrangement of the succession through these two lines of leadership has caused serious problems for the heirs apparent. David Bachman has noted:

To maintain his position as designated successor, the leader-to-be must maintain the trust of the top leader, the person who anointed him with the title of heir apparent. Yet the successor inevitably lacks some of the resources of the top leader. Thus, the successor must develop power bases independent of the top leader, whose patronage obviously disappears when the top leader dies. The dilemma arises from the fact that it is all but impossible for the successor to maintain the trust of the top leader and build an independent power base at the same time.[4]

Michel Oksenberg places an even heavier onus on a would-be successor to Deng. According to Oksenberg, such a figure must possess, "a deliberate, sober, disciplined and reserved style; the ability to elicit respect and support from the party elders; the ability to deal effectively with Deng; and the political ability to consult effectively and hold together a broad coalition."[5]

It is not surprising that neither Hu nor Zhao was able to meet these requirements. Holding together a broad coalition requires endless lobbying of different factional groupings and frequent policy compromises. In an environment of dramatic social change, however, with the policy preferences before the leadership typically polarized, too many compromises could spell the end of real reform. Moreover, Zhao was reputedly very bad at maintaining personal alliances, let alone creating many new ones.

Hu and Zhao also quickly developed their own vested interests in reform, which further served to constrain their options. They sought to protect the reform policies to which they were committed, as well as the social base that supported the policies. Hu Yaobang thus found it hard to move against the student demonstrators in late 1986 with the force demanded by the elders in the second line. Zhao also became something of a captive of his supporters in society, making it almost impossible for him to compromise in the interests of his survival once "people's power" erupted into large-scale protest in Tiananmen Square. As it was, he made a last desperate and not altogether responsible effort to save himself by making an unprecedented appeal to the social base of reform, with tragic results.

But as thorough as Bachman and Oksenberg are in cataloging the qualities and skills important in a would-be successor, both overlook a very important attribute—a willingness to shoulder responsibility for the policy errors of a mentor, particularly Deng. Both Hu and Zhao ended up defying Deng's instructions because these conflicted with their own developed interests and those of their supporters in society. They both paid the price—they fell and were disgraced—but Deng's prestige, too, was damaged in the process.

The division of the leadership by lines created structural confusion at the apex of the party, which was to have profound implications. According to theory and the party constitution, the Central Committee should be the highest authority between party congresses. The Politburo and its Standing Committee are elected by the Central Committee to carry out day-to-day work in its name. For historical reasons, however, the political power of the first two bodies outgrew what was entrusted to them to the extent that the Central Committee can no longer control their decision-making processes. The roots of this power shift lie in the wartime conditions that made the convening of plenary sessions very difficult. Thus, the responsibility and power of the Central Committee existed only in name. In fact, the Standing Committee commands the Politburo and the Politburo commands the Central Committee. This long-standing

[3]F. C. Teiwes, "Mao and His Lieutenants," *Australian Journal of Chinese Affairs* (Canberra), No. 19-20, 1988, pp. 1–81.

[4]David Bachman, "Varieties of Chinese Conservatism and the Fall of Hu Yaobang," *Journal of Northeast Asian Studies* (Washington, DC), Spring 1988, p. 38.

[5]Michel Oksenberg, "China's 13th Party Congress," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), November-December 1987, p. 8.

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Deng Xiaoping pictured with a series of his putative successors: at top, with Hu Yaobang in 1984; at bottom, with Zhao Ziyang at the 13th Congress of the Chinese Communist Party (CCP) in October 1987; to the right, with Jiang Zemin at a plenum of the CCP Central Committee on November 10, 1989.

—Photos by Eastfoto, Eastfoto, and Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos.

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supremacy of the Politburo is illustrated by the absence of a single Central Committee veto of any proposal coming to it from the smaller body. This high concentration of political power in the hands of a few senior leaders has had an enormous impact on politics at the top level. The power of these senior leaders is so established that it is barely diminished if at all by official retirement. Even after Deng and Chen Yun retired from the Standing Committee, they continued to wield enormous power and influence over the course of national affairs.

The cynicism with which this was viewed in some circles on the eve of the June crisis came through in Wu Zuguang's account of a student jingle:

> *The lower levels obey the upper levels.*
> *The upper levels obey Party Central.*
> *Party Central obeys Deng Xiaoping.*
> *Deng Xiaoping obeys impulse.*[6]

For much of the history of the People's Republic of China (PRC), the Politburo has been the highest policy-making body, although on occasion its decision processes were disrupted by Mao's edicts. After its establishment in 1956, the Secretariat handled the general management of the party, leaving the Politburo to concentrate on key policy questions. For the most part, the Politburo exercised control through three channels: the Secretariat for party management, the State Council for government administration and policy implementation, and the Central Military Commission for the People's Liberation Army.

However, by September 1985, when the National Party Conference was convened, the power of the Politburo had significantly diminished. More than half of the Politburo members had retired to the second line (see Table 1), where they were increasingly divorced from daily party and government administration. The Secretariat had gradually assumed much of the decision-making power of the Politburo, with most of its members charged with responsibility for one or two major policy areas. The Secretariat had also instituted a system of reporting from the ministries of the State Council and the provincial governors that enabled the general secretary to easily penetrate the work of both central and regional government.

As the power of the Politburo eroded, the government administrative arm of the party, the State Council, greatly expanded its power in the management of economic affairs. Zhao Ziyang initially consolidated his au-

[6]Quoted in Perry Link, "The Chinese Intellectuals and the Revolt," *The New York Review of Books*, June 29, 1989, p. 39.

Table 1: Leadership Echelons of the CCP Politburo on the Eve of the National Conference of the Central Committee, September 18–23, 1985

Name	Age	Other significant posts
		"FIRST-LINE" LEADERS
Hu Yaobang	70	General Secretary
Zhao Ziyang	66	Premier
Yang Shangkun	78	Permanent Vice-Chairman of Central Military Commission (CMC)
Xi Zhongxun	72	Member of Politburo
Wan Li	69	Senior Vice-Premier, member of Secretariat
Yang Dezhi	69	Member of Secretariat, Chief of PLA General Staff Department
Yu Qiuli	71	Member of Secretariat, Director PLA's General Political Department
Li Desheng	69	Commander, Shenyang Military Region
Zhang Tingfa	67	Commander, Air Force
Song Renqiong	76	Director, Central Committee Organization Department
Qin Jiwei[1]	71	Commander, Beijing Military Region
Chen Muhua[1]	64	State Councillor
		"SECOND-LINE" LEADERS
Ye Jianying	88	Former Chairman, National People's Congress (NPC) Standing Committee
Deng Xiaoping	81	Chairman, CMC and Central Advisory Commission
Chen Yun	80	First Secretary, Central Discipline Inspection Commission
Li Xiannian	80	President of the People's Republic of China
Peng Zhen	83	Chairman, NPC Standing Committee
Deng Yingchao	81	Chair, Chinese People's Political Consultative Committee
Nie Rongzhen	86	Vice-Chairman, CMC
Xu Xiangqian	84	Vice-Chairman, CMC
Wu Liangfu	79	Vice-Chairman, NPC Standing Committee
Wang Zhen	77	Vice-Chairman, NPC Standing Committee
Wei Guoqing	72	Vice-Chairman, NPC Standing Committee
Fang Yi	79	State Councilor
Ni Zhifu	53	Chairman, All-China Federation of Trade Unions

[1]Alternate member, Politburo

SOURCES: Drawn from official publications and numerous issues of *Renmin ribao* (Beijing).

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thority on the economic front by going along with Chen Yun and the advocates of central planning during the period of readjustment between 1979 and 1983. This stance won him the crucial support necessary to lead the push for economic reform at the Third Plenum of the 12th Central Committee in October of 1984. The plenum's communiqué stipulated that all important reform measures must first be assessed and approved by the State Council,[7] which Zhao headed as premier. Using this arrangement Zhao was thus able to break through the complex politics at the center and achieve his policy ends. When the urban reforms were launched at the end of 1984, he reasserted his support for thoroughgoing economic reform. At this point, both in the handling of day-to-day affairs and in larger policy questions, the locus of decision-making had shifted to the first-line leaders operating under the general command of Deng, while the Politburo virtually ceased to function.[8]

The position of the PLA in the central tripartite power structure also shifted during this period. In theory, the CMC was responsible to the Central Committee and the Politburo in the conduct of military affairs. Yet, particularly after 1985, when PLA representation in the Politburo was reduced to an all-time low, military work increasingly came under the control of Deng as CMC chairman. It may well have been part of Deng's grand design to remove the senior military members from the Politburo to forestall their opposition to some of the reforms, although the PLA should not be seen as opposing all of Deng's policies. Whatever the reason, Deng was able to tighten his grip on the army and at the same time prevent its leaders from forming a coalition with other conservative party elements within the Politburo.

Before the 13th Party Congress in 1987, the leadership consensus, with the Politburo at the core, had split apart as each of the three powerful institutional hierarchies went its own way. The breakdown of the consensus added an institutional dimension to the policy disputes already emerging over reform among the groupings at the apex of power. The lack of institutional procedures for the regulation and coordination of the political power held by the general secretary, the premier, and the army gave rise to many conflicts. Hu Yaobang openly conceded, "With Comrade Deng Xiaoping taking charge [of the Army], it is sufficient for him to say one sentence, but we [Hu and Zhao] have to say five sentences. Our five sentences also work, but he has to utter only one sentence."[9] Even relations between Zhao and Hu were not smooth. In the meetings of January 1987 that led to the removal of Hu as general secretary, Zhao is alleged to have said that when the old generation of revolutionaries was around, "I already had difficulties co-operating with Comrade Yaobang. I did not know how to work with him when they were gone."[10]

From an institutional perspective, the main issue that brought down Hu was the uneven distribution of power among the Secretariat, which was trying to establish control over more fields than it could handle while under the scrutiny of the second-line leaders; the State Council, which sought unimpeded authority in carrying out economic reform; and the PLA, which was powerful enough to resist or at least dilute directives from anyone except the paramount leader, Deng Xiaoping. Hu Yaobang's fall highlighted the dangers inherent in leadership by separate lines.

The 13th Party Congress in October 1987 began to address this problem, but no solution was forthcoming. As Zhao's fall in June 1989 was to demonstrate, a key prerequisite for the abolition of two-line leadership was for the old, second-line leaders to relinquish their power. Bringing this about proved beyond the capacity of the 13th Congress. The 13th Congress did, however, make some progress toward the institutionalization of power at the apex, as reflected in the restoration of the power of the Politburo and the downgrading of the Secretariat. Zhao's confident rhetoric, "the Politburo believed," "the Politburo agreed," and "the Politburo decided," indicated to the public that a major change had taken place. Zhao also managed to establish a new policy-making process through a series of Politburo working sessions. Sixteen sessions had been convened by the time of his dismissal, each one tackling one or two key problems.[11] Policy initiatives came up from the general secretary, the premier, or a member of the Standing Committee, but Zhao seems to have controlled the agenda. The submissions were prepared with the assistance and research of the various "think tanks" around Zhao but probably required some support from other members. Full meetings of the Politburo were required in order to authorize policy, and in the event of grave disagreement or the lack of a clear majority, the decision went to the Central Committee plenum.

Because decision-making power had been transferred to a new Politburo composed largely of first-line leaders, the party elders had less opportunity to inter-

[7]Communiqué of the 3rd Plenum of the 12th CC, *Since the Twelfth National Party Congress*, Beijing, People's Publishing House, 1987, p. 584.

[8]See the interview with Zhao Ziyang in A. Doak Barnett, *The Making of Foreign Policy in China*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1985. esp. pp. 9–13.

[9]Interview with Lu Keng, publisher of *Pai Hsing* (Hong Kong), on October 15, 1985, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: China* (Washington, DC), June 1, 1985, p. 16.

[10]Interview, Ministry of Foreign Affairs official, 1988.

[11]See the communiqués issued after each Politburo working session.

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Chen Yun, Deng's major rival for paramountcy in the aging "second line" of Chinese leadership.

—Eastfoto.

vene in policy processes. Under the 1982 party constitution, as members of the Central Advisory Commission (CAC), they had the power to oversee the work of the Secretariat. But, after the 13th Congress, members of the CAC could no longer give orders to the Politburo, but only advise. Their right to attend Politburo meetings was also curbed. Policy formation after the Congress indicated that the new Politburo had more success in resisting outside interference than had the old Secretariat. More significant, it was the leader of the Politburo who was more likely to emerge as successor to Deng than the head of the now less powerful Secretariat. To this extent, the Congress had charted a course toward institutionalized collective leadership and an orderly succession.

Under more normal circumstances, the arrangements made by the 13th Congress might have been successful. However, the CCP leadership, already divided into long-established factional groupings, was further split by discord over reform policy, and struggles for policy dominance and for political power became so entangled that the grand design for the succession could not be realized.

Deng and His Rivals

Deng's "second revolution," launched in 1978 to effectively modernize and open up China, had initiated a redistribution of power among different social forces and their representatives or brokers within the party. The decade of reform had produced a majority grouping at the top led by Deng, Hu Yaobang, and Zhao, and a number of minority groupings loosely revolving around Chen Yun and Li Peng. The Deng-Hu-Zhao camp was committed to overhauling and replacing much of the central economic command structure. The Chen-Li groupings did not want to see the basic elements of the system discarded, although they gave their qualified support to the main thrust of the reform program. The policy oscillations of the last decade have reflected this competition for power and influence. Each side represented different social groups and developed different interests in reform, and these vested interests determined power relationships within each camp. The conservatives drew closer together in order to survive, whereas the Deng-Hu-Zhao camp lost its cohesion as a result of disagreements over short-term and medium-term goals.

Deng's power as paramount leader over the last decade has not been absolute, and his power base remains circumscribed. Unlike Liu Shaoqi and Zhou Enlai, who developed their personal networks within the party apparatus and the State Council, Deng had no such opportunity—he was used by Mao only in the role of chief executive officer. Although the fact that he did not get along particularly well with either Liu or Zhou served him well when he was rehabilitated for the first time in 1973,[12] it later contributed to his relatively weak position.

In the post-Mao era, Deng became prominent only after having allied himself with Chen Yun to oust Hua Guofeng. This accomplished, he proceeded to groom Hu and Zhao to handle the administration of the party and government, and then set about placing senior officers from his old division and the Second Field Army network in many of the key posts in the PLA. Prior to the military reform in 1985, these officers included Hong

[12]Deng was brought back by Mao to balance the enhanced power of Zhou Enlai after the death of Lin Biao. Although Deng's return coincided with Zhou's rehabilitation of a number of old cadres, the immediate factor for Mao was Deng's pledge, in a letter forwarded by Wang Zhen, not to reverse the verdicts and decisions of the Cultural Revolution. At first, Deng kept this pledge and followed Mao's leadership.

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Xuezhi, Commander of the General Logistics Department; Zhang Tingfa, Commander of the Air Force; Liu Huaqing, Commander of the Navy; and no less than five out of the eleven military region commanders.

Deng has also had to cope with numerous other figures who carry considerable weight in contemporary Chinese politics, a situation that sometimes frustrates his consistent efforts to balance reform and conservative groups. Peng Zhen, who inherited or took over most of Liu Shaoqi's followers from the "white area underground party," is a clear example and Chen Yun, who has a power base in the central economic and financial system, is another. Chen entered the Politburo two decades before Deng, and Peng pre-dates him by 10 years. Chen Yun, Li Xiannian, and Ye Jianying (until his death) hung onto office to thwart Deng on a range of issues. Zhou's widow, Deng Yingchao, and the two surviving marshals, Nie Rongzhen and Xu Xiangqian, have at times differed with Deng over his policy initiatives. Important party elders, such as Li Xiannian, Wang Zhen, Bo Yibo, Yang Shangkun, and Zhang Aiping all have independent roles in elite politics. These figures seldom demonstrate much cohesion of opinion except in times of crisis, and even then, cohesion is not a certainty. The events of June 1989 found them divided and without clear-cut positions. The leaders in the propaganda and ideological institutions, on the other hand, do constitute a more organized opposition to Deng on reform; they are led by Hu Qiaomu and Deng Liqun. PLA officers disgruntled by Deng's promotion of old field army associates form another opposition group.

The collective force of this diverse group of political foes helps to explain why Deng has clung to power for so long, despite his frequent and ritual claims that he wishes to retire. Deng's reforms have been very controversial and to bring them to the point where they would be impossible to reverse requires firm control over his succession. Again, one might draw a parallel with Mao, and his attempts to prevent a reversal of the Cultural Revolution (which he regarded as one of his greatest achievements) after his departure. Mao's dismissal of Deng, his protection of the "Gang of Four," and his appointment of Hua Guofeng were all designed to protect what Mao viewed as the achievements of the Cultural Revolution.

Zhao's Fall From Power

In the period immediately after Hu Yaobang's removal, Deng seemed confident in Zhao's capacity to safeguard the reforms, and was willing to protect him by playing down his errors in economic decision-making. Deng stated that it was the neglect of education, the very area where Li Peng held responsibility, that was the major problem in the reform decade.[13] He also created the post of first vice-chairman of the CMC for Zhao and swung his support behind him in both the campaign against "spiritual pollution" and the "anti–bourgeois liberalization" drive in 1987. In both cases, Deng allegedly followed the advice of his son, Deng Pufang, who warned that if these campaigns were too vigorously carried out, the whole reform camp and thus Deng's power base would be in danger. The reformers around Hu and Zhao were important levers against the minority groupings led by Chen Yun.

Nevertheless, in the end, Deng sacrificed first Hu and then Zhao in order to safeguard his "second revolution." Hu was removed from the position of general secretary in January 1987 after Deng, fearful of a major split in the party and a Chinese Gdańsk, decided that Hu's leadership style risked provoking both strikes among urban workers and the possible emergence of independent unions similar to Solidarity.[14] The removal of Hu shifted to Zhao the burden of demonstrating that he could be a credible successor to Deng. Immediately after the 13th Congress, however, Zhao Ziyang's leadership became every bit as assertive as Hu's, causing the conservatives to regroup. In retrospect, Deng's decision that Zhao should quit the premiership to become party chief can be seen as an early attempt to check Zhao's over-zealous emphasis on market forces in the economy. Zhao himself seemed to recognize it as such—he complained in public to a visiting American publisher that this move cost him control over the management of the economy.[15]

As the consequences of handing the succession to someone so opposed to the conservative coalition and almost certainly unacceptable to the party elders became clear, Deng's confidence in Zhao began to erode. The erosion of his confidence was hastened by the fact that in the post–13th Party Congress period, Zhao began to advocate political and economic reforms that moved away from Deng's blueprint. Also significant here was Deng's failure to endorse unequivocally the ideological formulation of "the initial stage of socialism"[16] put forth by Zhao in his report to the Con-

[13] *Renmin ribao* (Beijing), Mar. 23, 1989.

[14] It was widely believed that Hu's disgrace followed a warning from Chen Yun that was passed on to Deng by Bo Yibo during the student demonstrations of late 1986 and early 1987. Chen argued that the party would split if Hu did not leave. Deng then called on Chen Yun, and Hu's removal was agreed upon.

[15] *Renmin ribao*, Sept. 7, 1988.

[16] Ian Wilson, "Socialism with Chinese Characteristics: China and the Theory of the Initial Stage of Socialism," *Politics* (Canberra), May, 1989, p. 1.

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gress. Zhao's interpretation of the theory was in conflict with Deng's four cardinal principles (socialism, people's democratic dictatorship, leadership by the CCP, and Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought) as well as Deng's view of political reform as a means to achieve more effective party control rather than less.

Zhao's better contacts with the grass roots had persuaded him that, as a future national leader, he should cultivate a more benevolent image, which included assuming a tolerant attitude toward dissenting viewpoints emerging from intellectual circles. The domestic response to the crackdowns that followed the demonstrations of 1983 and 1987, together with the uncertainty they created abroad, convinced him that similar campaigns were ill-advised. In the tense weeks following the fall of Hu Yaobang, he resisted pressure from the ideologues to discipline either Yan Jiaqi, head of a Central Committee research unit on political reform, or Su Shaozhi, head of the Marxism-Leninism-Mao Zedong Thought Institute, for their heterodoxy.[17]

Perhaps most important, however, Zhao proved unable or unwilling to follow Deng's cyclical alternations between emphasis on openness and relative liberalization and stress on the four cardinal principles and control. Zhao was slow to anticipate Deng's shifts, and in the eyes of his mentor, he was out of step at least half the time. He laid himself open to attack by leaning toward the first alternative during the anti-liberalization campaign. In early 1987, in an attempt to ease tension, he made a speech on ideology and propaganda to a central work conference attacking the "ossified thinking" reflected in the dogmatic interpretation of the four cardinal principles. Although, in this instance, Deng, after listening to his son, swung his support in Zhao's direction (because the objective of the rightward lurch, the removal of Hu, had been achieved), it appears Zhao misread Deng's vote of confidence. Zhao moved to dilute the opposition to the intellectuals by placing the opening-up and reform ahead of the four cardinal principles. The principle of party leadership was to be upheld but the other principles were not to be invoked too often in public for fear of creating a reaction. In a speech that later would be used by the ideologues to discredit him, Zhao was quoted as saying, "What is the socialist road? I do not think that there is anyone who can give a clear definition!"[18]

However much he might have resented Deng's presence in the second line prior to the events in the spring of 1989, Zhao avoided an open break with him because it was obvious that he could not long survive a struggle with Li Peng without the backing of the paramount leader. Why he invited a direct clash with Deng after his return from North Korea by criticizing the *Renmin ribao* editorial of April 26[19] that he had previously approved remains a mystery.

There may be some clues to his decision in his exchanges with Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev in May, in which he indicated that he could not indefinitely brook interference from the second line, particularly from Deng and Chen.[20] He mentioned that Deng had overseen all key Politburo decisions and had an effective power of veto. But this was not the key "state secret" he was accused of revealing and which most foreign observers thought led to his downfall. He also asserted to Gorbachev that the party elders had agreed to give him full authority in major policy areas when the 13th Party Congress confirmed him as general secretary. Although this agreement was not published, he said it was understood by everyone in the circle.

This understanding of his authority no doubt explains why Zhao was so much more confident and positive in pushing economic reform after the Congress. Two steps taken then—the restoration of the Standing Committee as the supreme policy-making body and the ending of interference by the elders in the work of the Politburo—certainly strengthened Zhao's hand. It may also explain why he was so annoyed over the crucial *Renmin ribao* editorial of April 26, even though he knew it had been written at Deng's behest. Although Zhao approved the editorial by cable from North Korea, he no doubt resented being put in a position where his only possible response to a crucial matter was reactive.

His resentment clearly played a role in his decision to throw his weight behind political reform and the demonstrators. On May 4, he addressed the Asian Development Bank conference in Beijing, suggesting that the government should adopt a more moderate approach to the demonstrators—a move that escalated the level

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[17]See *Wenhui bao* (Shanghai), Aug. 8, 1989. During the height of the anti-bourgeois liberalization campaign, Yan wrote to Bao Tong, repudiating the charges leveled against him. Bao Tong reported accordingly to Zhao, stating that the investigation of Yan conducted under Deng Liqun was full of fabrications and unwarranted implications. He praised Yan as a disciplined communist and recommended that he continue to work at the center "as usual." Zhao accepted the submission and, in a clear indication of his support, endorsed it "agreed" before sending it on to the responsible leaders, Deng Liqun, Hu Qiaomu, and Wang Renzhi—a move that effectively silenced the ideologues.

[18]*Renmin ribao*, Aug. 9, 1989.

[19]The editorial branded the student opposition as anti-socialist in character and as likely to incite social unrest.

[20]It was Deng who aborted price reform in mid-1988, after reading two reports from Zhao's "think tank" on the foreign debt and the reform experience of Eastern Europe. Chen's response to the loss of macro-economic control was to again use high-priced goods to restore the value of the *renminbi*, this time using imports of electric durables, which fanned the fires of consumption and caused a drain on foreign reserves. He did not admit his errors.

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of student protests. Deng felt betrayed by Zhao, and vacillation over how to deal with him ceased. With the students jeering at his increasing incapacities and shouting "Down With Deng!", Deng's very political survival was at stake, and he had to act.

When the proposal to impose martial law in parts of Beijing was tabled in meetings of the Standing Committee and the Politburo on May 17, Zhao could do little but resign. Ironically, Zhao and Qiao Shi had drawn up plans to impose martial law in all major cities in 1988, when it was feared serious social unrest might break out in the wake of price reform;[21] now Zhao became the first victim of the measures.

Whereas Zhao's ties with Deng broke down only at the last moment, relations with the political groupings led by Chen Yun and Li Peng had become antagonistic long before the final showdown. His protection in early 1987 of a number of supposed "bourgeois liberals" greatly angered the conservative ideologues backed by Chen. But what finally convinced the Chen-Li camp that they could no longer work in a cooperative manner with Zhao was his masterstroke in keeping Deng Liqun out of the Politburo at the 13th Congress and, in the end, out of the Central Committee. Zhao's termination of the anti–bourgeois liberalization campaign effectively removed Deng Liqun and Hu Qiaomu as key arbiters in ideological work, a shake-up given institutional form with the appointment of Hu Qili to head propaganda and media affairs.[22]

This major victory over the conservative left was achieved with the backing of Deng Xiaoping. Deng, however, had agreed to list Deng Liqun as an alternate member of the Politburo on the eve of the Congress, no doubt in an attempt to balance contending forces. In Deng's view, the consensus on the broad thrust of reform would be undermined should Deng Liqun be excluded altogether, while his presence as a full member might disrupt the reform majority in Politburo decision-making. In this attitude, Deng was observing both the party's normative and prudential rules that the minority should be heard, but not necessarily given a vote.[23]

Deng Xiaoping's concession to the opposition put him at loggerheads with Zhao. It is believed that it was on Zhao's initiative and insistence that election to the Central Committee was changed to a system of multiple candidature, an arrangement that led to Deng Liqun's complete exclusion from the Politburo. Deng Liqun received little support from the congress delegates, many of whom had been chosen by Hu Yaobang's people before his resignation and others of whom were persuaded to vote against Deng by the newly-appointed provincial secretaries heading their delegations.[24] Zhao demonstrated in this incident that he would not accept all his mentor's views and was willing to depart from the rules and norms of post-Mao politics based on compromise and consensus when he perceived his own authority to be at stake.

Not unexpectedly, several rounds of intense political infighting followed the 13th Congress; in them, Zhao was the main instigator. He abolished an important conservative stronghold, namely, Deng Liqun's Central Policy Research Center, and he placed his men in most key posts in the propaganda apparatus. Zhao scored a further victory in the ideological field by reducing the prestige of the party theoretical journal, *Hong qi* (Red Flag), also dominated by the conservatives. Originally the theoretical journal of the Central Committee, it was relegated to a lesser unit, the Central Party School. Zhao commented in passing that he did not bother to read it much any more.[25] He also enhanced his power in the provinces by delegating more authority to local leaders, who now constituted a generally sympathetic majority on the Central Committee.

But Zhao's rivals also undertook several moves. Zhao encountered some serious reverses over policy that resulted in his losing control over the management of the economy. In military affairs, his plan to assume Deng's post as chairman of the CMC could not be realized in the face of mounting resistance from some of the senior generals. In retrospect, these reverses were a prelude to his political demise.

Much of the infighting in the 18 months following the 13th Congress centered around a struggle for policy dominance in the economy. Friction between the old and new economic systems created a range of problems, suggesting that China could not long remain poised in a transitional state, uncertain whether to move backward to central planning and a command economy or forward to a predominantly market economy. The debate focused on the goals of reform. If the goal was to provide an improved version of Chen Yun's Soviet

[21] *Renmin ribao*, Jan. 20, 1989. The plan was passed by the 12th working session of the Politburo and was discussed at the 1988 national conference on political and legal affairs.

[22] Chen had endorsed them several times, stating that in the present era it was difficult to find people like Hu Qiaomu, who had theoretical talent, and like Deng Liqun, who would stand up for what he thought and not fear persecution.

[23] On the "rules of the game," see F. C. Teiwes, *Leadership, Legitimacy and Conflict in China*, New York, M. E. Sharpe, 1984, Ch. 3.

[24] Interviews in 1988 with personnel involved in the Congress. Hu Jintao, the former first secretary of the Youth League and party secretary of Guizhou province at the time, was said to be particularly active. He is currently party secretary of Tibet.

[25] *Hong qi* was downgraded by being placed under the Central Party School and renamed *Qiu Shi* (Seeking Truth). Since Zhao's dismissal, the Central Committee has restored it as one of the central organs. See *Renmin ribao*, Aug. 18, 1989.

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Chinese Premier Li Peng calls for an economic slowdown and speedy improvement of relations with the Soviet Union at a September 30, 1988, reception in Beijing on the eve of China's National Day.

—Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos.

model with Chinese characteristics, then it had proceeded far enough. But if the goal was to put the economy under broad market direction, then reform had barely penetrated the periphery of the command structure and still had a long way to go. Here the struggle for policy dominance also became a struggle for the power necessary to carry reform forward to the end.[26]

Two major battles were fought in 1988, and Zhao lost both. The first took place at Beidaihe in August 1988 over the timing and duration of the price reform that the leadership had decided to carry out at the Politburo's working session two months earlier.[27] Zhao proposed an immediate implementation and a three-year timetable in order to establish a mature market as soon as possible. Li Peng and Yao Yilin countered with a proposal whereby price reform would be implemented gradually and have an eight-year period for evaluation. This raised the question whether a period of readjustment was necessary before prices were tackled. Such a readjustment would require the reimposition of central control and the partial roll-back of some of Zhao's more significant reforms, such as the retention of profits by enterprises and the devolution of some decision-making. Eventually the two sides agreed upon a compromise timetable of five years, but it amounted to a negation of Zhao's plans to move swiftly. In addition, Zhao also had to agree that no further price reforms would be launched until 1989.[28]

A month later at the 3rd Plenum of the 12th Central Committee even this compromise solution was negated; price reforms were postponed indefinitely, and a two-year readjustment of the economy was ordered. These moves, both deplored by Zhao, placed authority to deal with dislocations in the economy back in the hands of the central planners. As was demonstrated in the earlier readjustment phase of 1979–83, the power of the central authorities is generally greatly strengthened by such moves, and on this occasion it enabled them to reverse the tendency toward greater decentralization, a prerequisite for the development of a market system. Much as Chen Yun was able to check Deng during the earlier readjustment because of the increased authority similar policies gave him, the policies adopted in the eight months leading up to June benefited Li Peng in the power struggle with Zhao. Reform is currently in abeyance, and authority is being drawn in again by the center.

Zhao Ziyang's hold on the economy had, however, already been weakened by his forced relinquishment of the premiership in late 1987 and then the mid-1988 dismantling of the powerful Central Finance and Economics Leadership Group (CFELG), which he had still chaired.[29] The CFELG had been very close to the State Council when Zhao was premier, and his chairmanship of both policy-making and executive organs had helped him push through his economic reform program. Once the State Council came under the control of Li Peng, Li was able to extend his power over economic management without much reference to the Politburo, where Zhao held sway. Moreover, the party elders in the CAC provided formal and informal support to Li's efforts to redirect economic policy—support that became particularly significant once Deng began withdrawing his support from Zhao.[30]

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[26]On this debate, see Milton Friedman, "On China's Economy," a speech delivered at Stanford University on Nov. 21, 1988, reported in *Cheng Ming* (Hong Kong), No. 1, 1989, pp. 42–45.

[27]A summary of the confrontation was carried in *Chiushih Nientai* (Hong Kong), No. 9, 1989, pp. 16–19.

[28]*Jingji ribao* (Beijing), Aug. 19, 1989.

[29]*Renmin ribao*, Aug. 22, 1989.

[30]Li Peng and Yao Yilin could not have won the two battles at Beidaihe without backing from the CAC. Song Renqiong revealed that the CAC had reviewed the economic situation and proposed measures to rectify it. See *Renmin ribao*, Oct. 29, 1988.

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Yang Shangkun, Chinese president and vice-chairman of the Central Military Commission, grants the rank of general to senior officers of the People's Liberation Army on September 20, 1988. —Eastfoto.

All this provided the context for Zhao's fall and perhaps sheds some light on why he was growing increasingly desperate at the time when the pro-democracy movement was dominating Beijing politics. Nevertheless, his decision to throw in his lot with the pro-democracy demonstrators was not the determining factor in his ouster; indeed, his fate had already been decided. By borrowing the slogans and tactics of "people's power," he did, however, raise a faint prospect of reversing the growing anti-reform tide, at great risk.

PLA Opposition to Zhao

Zhao Ziyang's desperate and fatal decision to appear to side with the demonstrators and thus urge them on was taken in the face of mounting opposition within the PLA, which was progressively dissociating itself from him as its CMC first vice-chairman. In late 1988, Zhao had had to make what really amounted to a self-criticism following his advocacy of a "self-subsidy and self-development" policy for the PLA.[31] Of even greater significance was the fact that there were no signs that Deng's plan to transfer the daily management of the CMC from Yang Shangkun to Zhao was being implemented. Most decisions were still being made by Yang and only then referred to Zhao.[32]

Deng had installed Zhao near the top in the CMC as part of his plan for ensuring military support for an orderly succession. He had conducted a reshuffle of the high command, grooming Yang Shangkun for first-line leadership and moving Qin Jiwei into the Ministry of Defense. Other old comrades from the Second Field Army were also promoted to key posts to strengthen Deng's control. Of the 17 generals in place, no less than nine were from the Second Field Army or Deng's own unit, the 129th Division (see Table 2).

The resulting complex pattern of old alliances and factional groupings caused so much friction within the PLA that prior to the 13th Party Congress, Deng's tight

[31]Zhang Feng, "On the Overall Policy of Self-Development and Improvement," *Junshi jingjixue* (Beijing), No. 2, 1989, pp. 8–11.
[32]May 1989 interviews with persons working on the General Staff.

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Table 2: Backgrounds of PLA Generals, 1988[1]

Name	Age	Position(s)	Previous post(s)	Field army association
Hong Xuezhi[2]	76	Deputy Secretary-General, Central Military Commission (CMC)	Director, General Logistics Department (GLD); Col-gen. in 1955	Regiment commander of Taihang Military Region (MR) training school under Division 129 (prior to 1940)
Liu Huaqing[2]	73	CMC Deputy Secretary-General	Commander, Navy; Maj-gen. in 1955	Director, Political Department, 11th Army, 2nd Field Army
Qin Jiwei[2]	76	CMC Member, Defense Minister	Commander, Kunming, Chengdu, and Beijing MR's; Lt.-gen. in 1955	Commander, 15th Army, 2nd Field Army
Li Desheng[2]	73	Member, Standing Committee, Central Advisory Commission, (CAC); Political Commissar of National Defense University (NDU)	Commander, Shengyang MR; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Commander, 12th Army, 2nd Field Army
Zhang Zhen	75	Member, CAC Standing Committee; Director, NDU	Deputy General Chief of Staff, GLD; Lt.-gen. in 1955	Chief of Staff, 3rd Field Army
Chi Haotian	60	CMC member; Chief of PLA General Staff	Deputy Chief of PLA General Staff; Lt.-col. in 1955	Divisional political commissar in 27th Army, 3rd Field Army
Yang Baibing[2]	69	CMC member; Director, General Political Department (GPD)	Political Commissar, Beijing MR	2nd Field Army
Zhao Nanqi	62	CMC member; Director, GLD	Party secretary of Jilin province	Hong Xuezhi's close associate when latter demoted to Jilin after Peng incident in 1959
Xu Xin	68	CAC member, Deputy Chief of PLA General Staff	Chief of Staff, Beijing MR; Maj.-gen. in 1964	Commander, 63rd Army, North China Field Army
Guo Linxiang[2]	75	Secretary, Central Discipline and Inspection Commission (DIC); Deputy Director, GPD	Political Commissar, Chengdu and Nanjing MR's; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Commander, 6th sub-military region of Taihang MR under Division 129
You Taizhong[2]	71	CAC member, 2nd secretary of Central DIC	Commander, Chengdu and Guangzhou MR's; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Commander, 12th Army, 2nd Field Army
Wang Chenghan[2]	72	CAC member; Political Commissar, Academy of Military Science	Commander, Chengdu MR; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Regimental commander in Division 129
Xiang Shouzhi[2]	70	CAC member; Commander, Nanjing MR	Commander, 2nd Artillery; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Commander, 15th Army, 2nd Field Army
Liu Zhenhua	68	Political Commissar, Beijing MR	Political Commissar, Shenyang MR; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Political Commissar, 40th Army, 4th Field Army
Wan Haifeng[2]	69	CAC member; Political Commissar, Chengdu MR	Deputy Political Commissar, Jinan MR; Maj.-gen. in 1955	Veteran of Division 129
Wang Hai	63	Commander, PLA Air Force	Deputy Commander, Air Force, Guangzhou MR; Colonel in 1959	Veteran of 3rd Field Army
Li Yaowen	70	Political Commissar, PLA Navy	Deputy Political Commissar, Jinan MR; Vice Foreign Minister	26th Army, 3rd Field Army

[1]The information in this table is as of 1988, the year when ranks were restored in the PLA.
[2]Associates of Deng Xiaoping.

SOURCES: *Jiefang junjiang shuilu* (Namelist of PLA Marshals and Generals), Beijing, PLA Publishing House, 1987; *Kuang Chiao Ching* (Hong Kong), July 16, 1989, translated in Joint Publications Research Service, *China Report* (Washington, DC), CAR 89-111, Nov. 17, 1989, pp. 64–65.

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hold had been somewhat weakened, despite the authority Yang and Qin Jiwei had at their disposal. Deng's favoritism toward the Second Field Army was resented by the veterans from the more numerous First, Third, and Fourth Field Armies. With the encouragement of the two surviving marshals, Nie Rongzhen and Xu Xiangqian, these veterans were brought closer to former Politburo members Yang Dezhi and Yu Qiuli. This fairly extensive grouping also had close links with the elders of the CAC and so constituted something of a counterweight to Deng within the military.

On the eve of the 13th Congress, there was also a fourth group—a large contingent of younger, technocratic, and professional officers just below the top rank who were still reliant on their superiors and veteran leaders—that had to be considered in the complex arrangement of forces within the military. These officers' ties with the past are much looser than those of their senior officers, and most want to move away from the revolutionary model and its traditions. Together with the younger commanders in the military regions, they make up more than 50 percent of the PLA members on the Central Committee; they will be in an extremely strong position once the old guard leaves the stage. This group includes Li Jijun of the 38th Army Corps,[33] Li Qianyuan of the 1st Army Corps, and Lei Mingqiu, political commissar of the 42nd Army Corps—all of whom are Central Committee members. Alternate Central Committee members include Chen Shijun of the 13th Army Corps, He Daoquan of the 23rd, Qian Guoliang of the 27th, Qian Shugeng of the 47th, Zhou Yushu of the 24th (Zhou has since become head of the People's Armed Police), and Liang Guanglie of the 20th Army Corps.

In the future, support from these commanders will be sufficient to deliver control of the whole of China's military. At present, however, divisions within the ranks allow Deng to persist in passing over any army man for chairman of the CMC. How long this situation will obtain is uncertain, and it constitutes one of the major problems facing Deng. Recent events have demonstrated yet again that power does grow from the barrel of the gun, but it is no easy matter to find a convincing and acceptable civilian figure capable of replacing Deng who will be able to ensure that the gun will never be used to control the party.

Deng's appointees, Yang Shangkun and Qin Jiwei, no longer work closely together. Yang was given authority to oversee the military reforms, including the demobilization of a million men and the appointment of younger officers to new posts. He moved many of his men into the upper echelons, exploiting CMC standing orders that required such appointments to go through

Chinese Defense Minister Qin Jiwei.

—Eastfoto.

the leader in charge of day-to-day work before being reported to Zhao.[34] Those promoted were known as "generals of the Yang family" and include Yang Baibing, Yang Shangkun's half brother. Building his power base in this manner, Yang ran counter to Deng's preference for the Second Field Army and alienated his relations with Qin Jiwei and other military leaders.

During the debate on how to manage the merger of the military regions, Qin was said to have proposed that the regions should be abolished and a number of regional army groups established instead. The advantages of this arrangement included a much thinner in-

[33]Li Jijun was transferred to the CMC shortly before the imposition of martial law. The new commander of the 38th is alleged to be the son of the late senior colonel-general, Xu Guangda, a former vice-minister of Defense under Lin Biao. However, oral sources confirm Hong Kong reports that the son was relieved of his command because of his softness toward the students.

[34]Liu Han, et al., *Marshal Luo Ronghuan,* Beijing, PLA Publishing House, 1987, p. 838.

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termediate command structure between the CMC and the armies. The plan is believed to have foundered over the proposal that Beijing should have a higher-level army group. It was finally shelved, following opposition from Yang, which demonstrated that Yang had sufficient authority to frustrate Qin when necessary.

On occasion, enough of the old guard was able to come together to protect their interests when they perceived them to be threatened by those close to Deng. For example, when Xiang Shouzhi, commander of the Nanjing Military Region and an old Second Field Army associate of Deng, was recommended by followers from the Deng camp for promotion to Chief of Staff, Yang Dezhi (who once held the position himself) objected on the grounds that Xiang was from the same field army and even the same army corps, the 15th, as Qin Jiwei and that it was undesirable to have both key posts of Beijing commander and Chief of General Staff filled from the one group. Yang Shangkun supported the critics in this case. The position eventually went to Chi Haotian, a former divisional political commissar of the 27th Army with links to the old Third Field Army.

These tensions alarmed Deng. He believed that if not curbed, they would affect his own authority in the wider political arena. In formulating the personnel arrangements for the 13th Congress, Deng obviously attempted to ease these tensions by reducing the power of both Yang and Qin in military matters. He had the former appointed to the largely ceremonial national presidency and the latter to the post of Defense Minister and to the Politburo. It was intended that Zhao, as the first vice-chairman, would assume more and more of Yang's duties, although Yang would remain as "permanent vice-chairman." Qin's authority was also curtailed, since he had to relinquish command of the powerful Beijing military region. His demotion to ordinary membership on the CMC behind deputy-secretaries Hong Xuezhi and Liu Huaqing was particularly humiliating, since they were not Politburo members. Soon, Qin came to be viewed as a transitional political figure with no real future.

Zhao Ziyang's prospects for assuming full control of the CMC were good as long as Yang and Qin remained in conflict and were in the process of being moved aside. Following the 13th Congress, Zhao involved himself closely in the work of the CMC and made several inspection tours, accompanied by Yang on only one occasion. Zhao's heightened involvement was taken as a sign that the power transition had begun.[35] His most important action was to deliver his proposals for military reform to an enlarged conference of the CMC, which went on to approve them in principle. Although not specified in the newspaper report, it is very probable that Zhao presided over this enlarged conference.[36]

Despite these initial signs that a transfer of authority was taking place, the plan for Zhao's takeover of the main functions of the CMC did not succeed. According to one well-placed source, as late as mid-1988, Yang continued to handle day-to-day matters, presumably with Deng's approval—a sign that Deng's confidence in Zhao's being the right person to lead the army was already waning. Zhao's call for thorough reform of the party's ideological work within the military was severely criticized by Deng and Yang, who advocated instead that the PLA continue to "improve" its ideological work, a term acceptable to the high command. Articles also began to appear repudiating Zhao's advocacy of "self-support" plans for the PLA. Lieutenant-General Qian Diqian, deputy director of the National Defense University, argued that Zhao's proposal would lead the military in a dangerous direction by confusing its fundamental function in Chinese society and its status in the power structure.[37] Zhao's advocacy of a return to what were actually Maoist policies was clearly unwelcome, although the army had already benefited from engaging in arms production and lucrative sales abroad, which gained it a certain economic independence from the center. (Arms sales apparently do not require clearance by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, judging from the provision of rocketry to Saudi Arabia.) The PLA also retains a portion of the earnings from the sale of consumer goods produced in its factories.

Zhao Ziyang's failure to gain acceptance in the military may have its roots in how he was appointed in the first place. If the arrangement was part of a deal stitched up between Deng and Chen Yun as Deng's price for removing Hu Yaobang, Chen would have been aware that Zhao's prospects were poor, given Zhao's commitment to political reform, his record on economic policy, and his unresponsiveness to PLA demands while he was in charge of the state sector. Zhao was clearly vulnerable, and an alliance between the PLA and the conservatives in the Central Advisory Commission under Chen had a certain naturalness about it, since over two-thirds of the CAC members were either retired or active military personnel.

The policies Zhao advocated for the military were originally Deng's, including the call for a return to production, which simply echoed Deng's 1984 instruction for self-restraint and integration of the PLA in the nation-

[35] *Renmin ribao*, Jan. 7, 1988.

[36] *Renmin ribao*, Mar. 22, 1988.

[37] Qian Diqian, "Production Must Serve Military Training," *Junshi jingjixue*, No. 2, 1989, p. 21.

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al economic plan.[38] However, because no one dared to criticize Deng in public, Zhao became the target of the growing resentment over tight military budgets. The PLA pointed out that defense expenditures had actually dropped and that the ratio of defense to other spending in 1988 was down 7 percent from the ratio in 1980.[39] Funds for maintenance had fallen short of requirements by some 10 billion *yuan* each year, crippling the everyday operations of the PLA and strangling any attempt at real modernization. Not only were purchases of high-technology weaponry at a standstill, but conventional weapons could not be replaced. Forty percent of current equipment could no longer be maintained in a ready state, and low outlays for basic training had reduced the effectiveness of the forces. The PLA had for some time been alarmed at the poor quality of the recruits, which hampered its professionalization drive, and it blamed the fact that monthly incomes of only 37 *yuan* were at least 23 percent below those for average city dwellers. A survey revealed that 50 percent of conscripts believed that their standard of living had fallen since joining the army.[40] In the face of this deep resentment, Zhao was a natural scapegoat.

The PLA's role as arbiter in the Chinese political process has been reinforced by the events surrounding the fall of Zhao Ziyang.[41] As was the case with Hu Yaobang in 1987, Deng's second general secretary was unable to survive once he lost the support of the military. Although the influence of the PLA does not depend particularly on the army's representation in the formal institutions of the political system, the PLA is strengthened during times of political uncertainty and comes to prominence when civil order is threatened or, as happened in early 1987, its leaders and elders perceive a threat to exist. It can then act in the name of a higher cause—the preservation of the revolution—rather than in the name of the protection of the party as such.

Wang Zhen, from his vantage point within the CAC, has been important in articulating this position. He was

Wang Zhen, vice president of the People's Republic of China.

—Eastfoto.

particularly effective in his attacks on the controversial television series *He Shang,*[42] and Zhao Ziyang's favorable reaction to the themes it advanced. Wang argued that the series not only advocated sweeping reform of China's general orientation but, in his view, negated the past and China's cultural heritage in the process. He was morally offended that the General Secretary would countenance this view of the revolution and the past.

Historically, the PLA has been fairly effective in protecting its own interests, and following its armed intervention in support of the conservatives in June 1989, it is in a position to exact concessions from the new and less secure leadership.[43] Increased budgetary allocations and more autonomy, e.g., a greater say in the appointment of the next chairman of the CMC and in the composition of the CMC are likely demands.

[38]Zhu Dufa "Willingly Restrain Ourselves but Creatively Advance," ibid., No. 3, 1989, p. 9.

[39]Zhang Feng, "On the Overall Policy of Self-Development and Self-Improvement," ibid., No. 2, 1989, pp. 8–11.

[40]Ibid. Of course, the same survey indicates that half the conscripts see themselves as well or better off than before. This would be true of those from poorer provinces, such as Gansu. Such troops might be more inclined to use force against students they had been told were about to overthrow the system and whom they perceived as privileged. Troops from units garrisoned near Beijing, by contrast, might display less alacrity in obeying the same orders.

[41]For a discussion of the role of arbiter, see Amos Perlmutter and William M. LeoGrande, "The Party in Uniform: Toward a Theory of Civil-Military Relations in Communist Political Systems," *American Political Science Review* (Washington, DC), No. 4, 1982, p. 785.

[42]The television series, *He Shang* (River Elegy) was shown in May and June 1988. It examined China's history, strongly suggesting that the nation prospered when it looked outward to the ocean—in the modern context meaning the West—and not inward.

[43]June T. Dreyer, "The Role of the Armed Forces in Contemporary China," in E. A. Olsen and S. Jurika, Eds., *The Armed Forces in Contemporary Asian Societies*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1986. She mentions PLA opposition to liberalism and delaying Geng Biao's appointment as Defense Minister.

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The PLA might also be anxious to improve its public image after the events of June. One way to achieve this would be to transfer the unpopular duties of street patrols and crowd control over to the People's Armed Police, leaving the regular infantry to concentrate on military matters except in an emergency.

The PLA currently has a civilian role more extensive than at any time since the Cultural Revolution. Army men have replaced many of the newspaper editors and staff members in the party-controlled press, and the PLA's General Political Department (GPD) is involved in the political re-education of society. Peking University freshmen are to spend a year in the army before commencing their university education, and martial law has been lifted in name only. During the debate over Bai Hua's play *Bitter Love,* the GPD demonstrated that it had well-developed views on what is acceptable in the cultural sphere and what is not. In that case, it was quite unacceptable to suggest that the nation had not returned the love and sacrifice the soldier hero felt for his country.

New Leadership and Old Problems

China's transition toward a new leadership was accelerated at the Fourth Plenum in June 1989, but many problems remain. Although Deng is still very powerful, he can no longer be regarded as the paramount leader, despite attempts to establish his writings as the ideological and policy guide for the nation. And he is less effective in the role of balancer, a role which is now more crucial than ever. The Chen Yun–Li Peng–Yao Yilin group has added the Politburo and the party headquarters to the institutions under its control, the State Council having been captured in early 1988. Jiang Zemin and Li Ruihuan scarcely constitute a convincing counterweight. Worst of all, from Deng's standpoint, Chen Yun's constituency in the Standing Committee now exceeds his own. Qiao Shi's position is still uncertain, but Li, Yao, and Song Ping clearly have more influence than Jiang Zemin and Li Ruihuan. Furthermore, recent events have allowed the CAC to penetrate the dis-

Deng Xiaoping, right, with (left to right) Jiang Zemin, Li Peng, and Qiao Shi, in November 1989.

—Eastfoto.

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gruntled PLA and have contributed to Yang Shangkun's moving away from Deng. Even the loyal party elder, Bo Yibo, has questioned Deng's wisdom and obliquely called on him to shift the emphasis of his guidance on the reform policies.[44] Bo probably sees Deng's modest attempts at *glasnost'* and his promotion of Hu and Zhao as having led to the spring 1989 pro-democracy movement.

A problem for both factions in the current conflict is to provide convincing public images for their respective leaders, Li Peng and Jiang Zemin, and this is now being addressed energetically through the media. But China's political elite also remains bedeviled by the division between first and second lines, with the deep divisions in the second line threatening the precarious alliance in the front line. The problems of a very elderly second line have not been resolved, and may well not be until the death of one or both major figures. The order of their going will be crucial, and quite different outcomes would result if Deng were to die before Chen Yun.

In the meantime, interference from the second line continues and may eventually cause the same difficulties for the current front line that Zhao Ziyang experienced. The problematics of the situation are multiplied by the uncertain and changing position of the People's Liberation Army in the nation's political structure.

The rapidly changing international scene will also have an impact on China. The democratization of politics that has taken place in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe played a significant role in the changes that have taken place in Chinese politics since 1986 and particularly since the events surrounding June 3–4, 1989. Although the entry of society into China's politics through mass demonstrations was quickly followed by its forced exit, the removal is unlikely to be permanent. The issues that precipitated popular protests in April and May have not disappeared. Political settlements will increasingly have to take these issues into account, placing China's leaders in an even more uncertain environment. Their survival and success will depend on an ability to adapt to these changes in the conduct of politics in China, and the army will continue to monitor closely their attitudes and performance.

[44] *Renmin ribao*, Aug. 10, 1989. The piece was commemorating Ye Jianying and stated, "When you commit a mistake, correct it; then you will not fall. If you do not, it is inevitable that you will." If it was only Zhao Ziyang that he had in mind, then it would have been perfectly safe to mention him by name, for by August Zhao was out of office. That he did not strongly suggests Deng was the target.

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Portuguese Communism Since 1976: Limited Decline

Carlos Gaspar

In 1976, as the Portuguese revolutionary regime gave way to pluralist democracy, it seemed that the Portuguese Communist Party (Partido Comunista Português—PCP) would face a dilemma regarding its future: either to follow other major West European communist parties in adopting a more moderate political line or to continue its radical course and risk a decline into sectarian insignificance.[1] The PCP, however, did not accept that it was in an either/or situation, but set out to prove that it was possible to go a third way—that it could remain powerful in national politics while retaining an orthodox and dogmatic orientation and a subordination to the Soviet center.

The experiences of other West European communist parties gave few grounds for believing that the PCP would succeed. The largest of those parties had undergone partial democratization, had adopted policies of pragmatic opportunism, or had done both.[2] Nevertheless, the PCP seemed confident that Portuguese politics could make for an exception: after all, no other West European country had sustained a durable authoritarian regime and a revolution before reaching democracy. Furthermore, the Communist leadership was convinced that a stable pluralist democracy could not take root in Portugal, that democracy would be a transition toward either a communist regime or a traditional autocratic one.[3]

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The party decided on a dual strategy to maintain its revolutionary orthodoxy without becoming marginalized. On the one hand, it presented itself as a supporter of democratic stability, which could only be secured if and when further steps toward "socialism" were taken. On the other hand, the PCP tried its best to prevent the consolidation of pluralist democracy. Its purpose was to acquire both a revolutionary and a democratic legitimacy. The PCP wanted to be able to retain its identity as a revolutionary party, even as it pursued this goal mainly within the bounds of the constitutional framework.

The PCP stayed on this course for the next 12 years. At the beginning, this course proved effective. It allowed the party to undertake an orderly retreat in the aftermath of the revolutionary upheaval. During the first years of democracy, when political and economic instability prevailed, it allowed the PCP to consolidate its position. As the democratic regime slowly overcame its initial crises, however, the PCP's continued predictions about democracy's imminent demise became more untenable and its basic programmatic assumptions more questionable.

The Revolutionary Legacy

The collapse of Portugal's authoritarian regime as a result of the April 25, 1974, military coup d'état caught the PCP by surprise. Nevertheless, the Communists were quick to catch up with events. They participated in

[1]Eusebio Mujal-Leon, "The PCP and the Portuguese Revolution," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), January-February 1977, p. 40.

[2]Heinz Timmermann, *The Decline of the World Communist Movement. Moscow, Beijing and the Communist Parties of the West*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1987, pp. 124–25.

[3]Carlos Gaspar, "On the 'Democratic and National Revolution' " *Revista de Ciência Política* (Lisbon), No. 2, 1985, pp. 75–80.

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General Secretary Álvaro Cunhal addresses a rally of the Portuguese Communist Party in Oporto in April 1975.

—Photoreporters.

the provisional governments and found their best allies among the radical currents of the Armed Forces Movement (Movimento das Forças Armadas—MFA). During the following months, the Communists and their allies in the military became the strongest political force of the Portuguese revolution. They were instrumental in paving the way for the Soviet-backed movements that took power in the new states formed in the wake of Portugal's decolonization of its territories in southern Africa. They also tried to take over in Lisbon.

On November 25, 1975, leftist military units attempted unsuccessfully to stage a coup and form an exclusively left-wing revolutionary government.[4] The aftermath of the coup demonstrated that the PCP had not been able to channel the revolution into the creation of a communist regime. Portugal's political evolution toward an institutionalized democracy would go on.

At the same time, it was evident that the revolution had brought profound transformations in Portuguese society. The revolutionary expropriations—nationalizations without indemnity—of Portuguese banks, of the largest industrial enterprises, and of latifundia in southern Portugal disrupted the inner balance of Portugal's economy and left it under state control. The military retained a political role, one that could limit or even prevent the playing by democratic rules: in early 1976, the major parties and the military agreed on a transition period until 1980, during which the Council of Revolution[5] would continue to function. The President of the Republic, a military man, would chair the Council.

The constitution ratified on April 25, 1976, was an ambiguous document. On the one hand, it created a semi-presidential or semi-parliamentary framework for a liberal democracy. On the other, it gave a specific revolutionary dimension to the system by legitimizing the role of the military in government. The military-dominated Council of Revolution had sole control over the armed forces and veto power over legislation passed by parliament or by the government. It therefore acted like a constitutional court. The constitution ratified the revolutionary changes in the economy as integral to the existing system and defined the regime's aim as the building of socialism.[6] A compromise, the constitution reflected the political dominance of the Socialist Party (Partido Socialista Portuguesa—PSP) and of its allies in the military, that is, of the "coalition" that had successfully opposed the Communist takeover bid in 1975.

The PCP refused to admit its revolutionary failure in the face of these changes. Instead, Álvaro Cunhal, its long-standing general secretary, announced that the Portuguese revolution was far from over and had merely suffered a temporary setback due to divisions among the military.[7] He thus laid the foundations for the political myth to which the party would adhere in the following years. Through an interminable series of offensives and counter-offensives, this myth established the framework for continuity in the party's program.

The party's program adopted at its 1965 Congress (which was held in the Soviet Union) declared that Por-

[4]On the PCP during the revolutionary period, see Mujal-Leon, loc.cit., pp. 21–41; Kenneth Maxwell, "The Communists and the Portuguese Revolution," *Dissent* (New York), Spring 1980, pp. 194–206; Keith Middlemas, *Power and the Party. Changing Faces of Communism in Western Europe*, London, André Deutsch, 1980, pp. 188–213.

[5]The Council of Revolution was created in March 1975 and consisted solely of military officers, among them the president, the prime minister, and the chiefs of staff of the armed services.

[6]For a political analysis of the 1976 Constitution, see Manuel de Lucena, *O Estado da revolução* (The State of the Revolution), Lisbon, Expresso, 1978.

[7]Álvaro Cunhal, *A revolução portuguesa. O passado e o futuro* (The Portuguese Revolution. Past and Future—henceforth cited as *A revolução portuguesa*), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1976, pp. 125–82 and pp. 223–25.

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tugal had to go through a "democratic and national revolution" before reaching a "socialist" stage.[8] The party congress held in 1976 reaffirmed this general line, stressing that while some of the objectives of this intermediate stage had been accomplished—for instance, the decolonization of Portugal's African territories—the all-important "democratization of the state" was still to be attained. The democratization of the state was necessary to secure the partial revolutionary gains and bring the revolution to completion.[9] The program declared that Portugal had made immense progress. By escaping from the grip of national "monopoly capitalism," Portugal had become the most advanced democracy in Western Europe.[10] Either the Portuguese revolution would be brought to completion, or it would be destroyed by a restoration of the *ancien régime*. Through this programmatic rhetoric, the PCP tried to keep its revolutionary identity intact and to monopolize the legacy of the revolution—one that it had not brought about and that it had failed to harness to its own goals.

Their ideological predicament notwithstanding, the Communists still had to function within the existing regime. In order to do so, they joined the constitutional majority together with the Socialists and the Social-Democrats (Partido Popular Democrático—PPD, later Partido Social Democrata—PSD) in voting for the approval of the republic's constitution. Naturally, the PCP did not identify with the democratic aspect of the 1976 constitution, which did not fit with its own stance on the development of the Portuguese revolution. The party justified its vote by declaring that the constitution reflected "the present stage of revolutionary development."[11] In other words, the correlation of forces made it prudent to take one step back and to risk a measure of identification with the post-revolutionary regime.

Retreat from Revolutionary Tactics

In becoming party to the constitutional agreement, the PCP was trying to avoid political and institutional isolation and to acquire some degree of democratic legitimacy. It needed to ensure that its retreat from revolutionary tactics into competition according to the rules of democracy could be made with minimum losses. The defensive Communist strategy of 1976 was also designed to prevent the consolidation of those forces which had contained the PCP's previous attempts at taking power.[12]

By and large, the retreat was successful. The PCP and its allies—the Portuguese Democratic Movement (Movimento Democrático Português—MDP), a satellite party, and the Socialist Popular Front (Frente Socialista Popular—FSP), a socialist splinter group—kept their share of the vote (14.6 percent) in the April 1976 elections.[13] The PCP could count on a faithful electorate in the areas of its traditional influence (the industrial belt around Lisbon and, to a lesser extent, Oporto, as well as the Alentejo region, where the expropriation of latifundia had left the PCP in almost complete control of the province). The vote for the PCP was extremely light elsewhere, making the PCP more of a regional than a national party. Nonetheless, the PCP's share of the vote gave it a place in the parliament as one of the four major political parties, behind the Socialists, the Social-Democrats, and the Christian-Democrats (Centro Democrático Social—CDS).

The Communists' share of the electorate did not hold up in the presidential election three months later: almost half of the Communist voters deserted the official party candidate, Octávio Pato, to vote for Otelo Saraiva de Carvalho. Carvalho, one of the original instigators of the April 25, 1974 coup, who became a revolutionary symbol after his imprisonment on November 25, 1975, was the presidential candidate of the extreme Left. Seeking broader support, the PCP had presented itself in less radical terms; its proposals were conciliatory to the middle classes. This moderation left the more radical segments of its traditional electorate open to the influence of extreme-Left splinter groups. This electoral vulnerability was short-lived because the superior organization of the Communist Party rapidly overcame it.

Once a clandestine party, the PCP had grown steadily after the 1974 coup: from a core of 3,000 members to more than 100,000.[14] It substantially increased its strength when it won control of most of the trade unions under the General Confederation of Portuguese Work-

[8]Álvaro Cunhal, *Rumo à vitória. As tarefas do partido na revolução democrática e nacional* (The Path to Victory. The Tasks of the Party in the National and Democratic Revolution), n. p., Edições Avante!, 1964. See also *Programa do Partido Comunista Português (aprovado no VI Congresso do PCP)* (The Program of the Communist Party of Portugal [as approved at the VI PCP Congress]), n. p., Edições Avante!, 1965.

[9]Cunhal, *A revolução portuguesa*, pp. 58 and 117–23.

[10]Ibid., p. 121. See also *Resolução política do VIII Congresso do PCP* (Political Resolution of the 8th PCP Congress), Lisbon, Edição da SIP do PCP, 1976, p. 13; *Conferência de imprensa de Álvaro Cunhal em Roma* (Álvaro Cunhal's Press Conference in Rome), Edição da SIP do PCP, Feb. 11, 1977.

[11]*VIII Congresso do PCP* (The 8th PCP Congress), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1976, p. 227. See also Cunhal, *A revolução portuguesa*, pp. 183–90.

[12]Mujal-Leon, loc. cit., pp. 35–41.

[13]For the 1976 election, the PCP, the MDP, and the FSP formed the United People's Electoral Front (Frente Eleitoral Povo Unido—the FEPU), which was later dissolved when the FSP broke away from it. Before the 1979 elections, the PCP and the MDP re-formed a new coalition, the United People's Alliance (Aliança Povo Unido—the APU).

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ers (Confederação General de Trabalhadores Portugueses-Intersindical Nacional—CGTP-IN), and when it came to dominate most of the collective farms created after the expropriation of the latifundia in Alentejo.[15] In fact, the PCP had become a mass party.

Nevertheless, its Central Committee did not reflect either this growth in membership or the party's dominant position in the trade unions. At the 1976 Congress, the Central Committee was enlarged, but only with the formerly clandestine party professionals. A handful of party veterans in the Central Committee Secretariat who were simultaneously members of the Political Commission ran the party organization. The three senior members, including Cunhal and Pato, had been in the Secretariat for more than 20 years; the others had been promoted in the 1960's, after Cunhal's formal accession as general secretary.[16] Apparently fearing that the CGTP-IN leaders could become an institutionalized force within the organization, the PCP, in contrast to the normal practice of the other major West European communist parties, did not include union leaders in the Central Committee.[17]

In comparative terms, by 1976 the PCP was the third largest West European communist party. It stood behind the Italian Communist Party (Partito Comunista Italiano—PCI) and the French Communist Party (Parti Communiste Français—PCF) in percentage of vote, but it had more members (proportional to population) than the PCF. The Portuguese Communists were first in terms of control over the trade unions.[18]

During the Portuguese revolutionary upheaval, the PCP had far more power than the PCI or the PCF ever possessed. Although it lost its unique influence with the institutionalization of democracy, it still held extensive control over some revolutionary institutions, especially those that had come into being in the wake of agrarian reform. Nonetheless, the Portuguese Communists suffered from a relative handicap, because the Socialist Party had the power to prevent the formation of a left-wing majority and effectively kept the PCP out of the government.

This handicap, as well as a relatively weak electoral standing, may have been blessings in disguise. Had the Communist Party been stronger, the Socialists might have felt the need to form an alliance with the PSD and to consolidate an anticommunist bloc in power. As it was, after the 1976 elections, the PSP decided to form a minority government with the support of the President of the Republic, General Ramalho Eanes. Eanes had been elected by a broad coalition of political groups, ranging from the PSP to the CDS. The Socialists were convinced that the PSD and the CDS would never get together with the PCP so as to have sufficient strength to carry a vote of no confidence against the Socialist government. Barring such a coalition, the Socialists believed that their minority government would survive until 1980. If the government survived, the PSP, in control of the state apparatus, could then become the dominant force in Portuguese politics.

The decision of the Socialists to form a minority government left the Communists in a favorable position. Although the Socialists were determined to cut down PCP influence, they still needed Communist votes in parliament, in order to put together a parliamentary majority when necessary. Thus, even though the PCP was not bound by any permanent accord with the Socialists, it also was not consistently in opposition to Portugal's first democratic government.

Communist Consolidation

During the first year of the Socialist minority government, the Communists kept a rather low profile, concentrating on internal reorganization and seeking to

[14]Prior to April 1974, the PCP did not release any official data concerning membership figures. The estimate of 3,000–4,000 is reasonable and is based on Neil McInnes's data and on intelligence reports. The first official figures released by the PCP were for July 1974 and put the party's membership at 14,000; figures for April 1975 showed an increase in membership to 100,000. In November 1976, the PCP claimed 115,000 members. See Neil McInnes, *The Communist Parties of Western Europe*, London, Oxford University Press, 1975; F. Blanqui Teixeira, "On the Organization of the Party," in *VIII Congresso do PCP*, op. cit., pp. 47–50; and "Our Party," *O Militante* (Lisbon), No. 100, 1983, pp. 15–22. For a thorough analysis of PCP membership, see also José Pacheco Pereira, "The Portuguese Communist Party and the Revolutionary Left," in M. Baptista Coelho, Ed., *Portugal. O sistema político e constitucional. 1974–1987* (Portugal. The Political and Constitutional System. 1974–1987), Lisbon, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, 1989, pp. 79–91.

[15]For a discussion of interest groups in Portugal, see the forthcoming book by Manuel de Lucena and Carlos Gaspar, *Métamorphoses corporatives? Les associations d'interêts et l'institutionalisation de la démocratie au Portugal* (Corporatist Metamorphoses? Interest Associations and the Institutionalization of Democracy in Portugal), IUE-ICS; also José Barreto, *A formação do sindicalismo moderno em Portugal (1968–1988)* (The Formation of Modern Trade Unionism in Portugal [1968–1988]), Lisbon, Instituto de Ciências Sociais, 1989.

[16]The party Secretariat had four members in 1974. In 1976, three new members were added: Carlos Costa, who was on the Political Commission, Domingos Abrantes, and Jorge Araújo. The last two were younger, (both were in their 40's) and had joined the party in the 1950's. They became members of the Political Commission in 1979 and 1983, respectively. See "Membership of the Central Committee Elected by the Congress," *VIII Congresso do PCP*, op. cit., pp. 285–87.

[17]This rule was infringed in 1983 and 1988, when three members of the CGTP-IN Executive Committee, including Carvalho da Silva, its coordinator, appeared on the Central Committee lists. However, none was listed as a trade union leader. See *Avante!* (Lisbon), Dec. 6, 1988.

[18]See Timmermann, op. cit., pp. 127–70; and Michael Waller and Meindert Fennema, Eds., *Communist Parties in Western Europe. Adaptation or Decline?* London, Basil Blackwell, 1988, Appendix 1, pp. 261–62.

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distance themselves from their image as a revolutionary party determined to undermine democratic stability. The PCP defended, as well as it could, its territories—the CGTP-IN monopoly in representing trade unions and the collective farms—against Socialist offensives. At the same time, the PCP derived political benefits from the economic austerity measures the government was forced to adopt in early 1977.

The Socialists were soon to find out how quickly their government could become isolated, losing its *état de grâce* in the face of an economic crisis and a reluctant President of the Republic. To break out of this downward spiral, the PSP came closer to the PSD: the two parties made a parliamentary agreement in order to roll back some of the more restrictive economic and social legislation—on agrarian reform, private entrepreneurship, indemnities, and labor relations—left over from the revolutionary period.

By then, the Communist Party felt strong enough to resume its radical opposition against the Socialist Party. It did so in no uncertain terms, calling on President Eanes to dismiss the minority government, dissolve parliament, and hold early elections. Moreover, it claimed that the Socialist government's betrayal of the revolutionary legacy was so profound that it created a political vacuum. The PCP felt that it alone could not fill this vacuum and thus called for participation on the part of other, as yet inchoate, forces representative of the middle-class strata estranged from the PSP.[19]

Their new tactics proved to be somewhat premature. Less than six months later, the minority government was on the verge of collapse, caught between need to introduce radical measures to improve the ruined economy and the uncompromising opposition of Francisco Sá Carneiro, the PSD leader. Prime Minister Mário Soares called on the parties and the interest associations to negotiate a common platform, if they wanted to prevent a political crisis. When they did not, he asked for a vote of confidence in parliament on December 7, 1977. The PCP joined the PSD and the CDS in a no-confidence vote that forced the Prime Minister to resign.

The PCP's position was, nonetheless, ambiguous. The party had shown real flexibility during the negotiations, even accepting, on condition that they be implemented with restraint, the very policies that it had utterly rejected the previous summer.[20] It continued to behave moderately when Soares was forming the next government and trying to find partners for the parliamentary majority demanded by President Eanes. This moderation was above all due to the seriousness of the economic crisis. The Communist leadership was aware that the military, which had political power, would not stand for any radical opposition at such a time. The PCP was also being treated like any other political party and so was breaking out of the depths of its former political isolation. Finally, the presidential majority of 1976 had broken up and the chances of a PSP-PSD majority government, which was opposed by Sá Carneiro, were nonexistent. This left an alliance between the Socialists and the Christian-Democrats as the only choice.

From the PCP's perspective, such an alliance had the double advantage of being weak and of confirming the Communist thesis on the convergence between the Socialist Party and the right-wing forces. The PCP had nothing to lose from that alliance. Moreover, the second government even behaved with restraint in those areas in which confrontation with the Communists would seem inevitable: control over collective farms, land redistribution, and the formation of a trade union confederation to compete with the CGTP-IN.

Perhaps even more important to the PCP was the perception that the fall of the Socialist government created a period of political instability on top of an economic crisis. In the summer of 1978, the Socialist/Christian-Democratic alliance came to an end. President Eanes then tried to consolidate his own position by appointing independent prime ministers, in contravention of parliamentary rules. He failed both to muster sustained support from the political parties and to create a presidential majority by splitting the PSD and isolating the PSP. Political instability became the rule until the December 1979 elections.

The PCP was one of the main beneficiaries of this situation. It had been out of government since 1976 and bore no direct responsibility for the economic crisis. Although it had lost some ground in the Alentejo and in the trade unions—after the Socialists and the Social-Democrats finally decided to create the General Union of the Workers (União General dos Trabalhadores—UGT) to compete against the Communist-dominated trade unions in late 1978—but the Socialists had lost more, starting with their hegemonic position in the government. The permanent instability also gave hope to those, including the Communists, who expected pluralist democracy to be merely a precarious and transient phase.

The 1979 election gave the Communist Party its best results ever. It received 19 percent of the vote, representing more than a million voters. The party was able

[19]*Resolução do CC do PCP: Em defesa das conquistas da revolução e da democracia* (Resolution of the PCP CC: In Defense of Revolutionary Gains and Democracy), Lisbon, Edição da SIP do PCP, July 31, 1977, pp. 7–13.

[20]Commisão Política do CC do PCP, *Propostas do PCP para a elaboração de uma plataforma (Resposta ao memorando apresentado na AR)* (PCP Proposals for the Platform [Reply to the Memorandum Presented to the Assembly of the Republic]), Nov. 21, 1977, unpublished document.

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to attract voters outside its traditional strongholds, getting sizable support in the industrialized districts north of Lisbon, such as Braga and Aveiro. It became less of a regional party, although the distribution of its electorate remained quite uneven. The Communist vote continued to be insignificant in northern rural areas and in the Atlantic archipelagos. Moreover, the electoral advantage of the Socialist Party over the PCP dropped from 20 to 12 percentage points. The Left also lost its previous "arithmetic" majority of seats in parliament to the Democratic Alliance (Aliança Democrática—AD), a Center-Right coalition built around the PSD and CDS. The Socialists joined the Communists in opposition to the new government headed by Sá Carneiro.

The next step for the PCP was to become part of the presidential majority, joining the Socialists in supporting the reelection of President Eanes. Eanes's major opponent was another general, António Soares Carneiro, the AD candidate. Mário Soares, the Socialist leader, who was not himself a candidate, withdrew his support from his former ally. The Communists had come a long way since 1976. At that time, the PCP had been a defeated party in retreat. The main cleavage in the party system set the PCP apart from the other three major parties. This cleavage excluded the Communist Party from the presidential majority and from any permanent formal agreement with the democratic parties. The PCP was a small minority party on the Left, almost an outcast, overwhelmed by a Socialist party more than double its size, in power and determined to roll back Communist revolutionary gains.

Four years later, the PCP was no longer on the defensive. It had grown both as an electoral and as a mass party—having more than 160,000 members[21]—while the Socialist Party was in decline. The Communist strategy of striving for hegemony over the Left was no longer unrealistic in the face of a weakened and divided Socialist Party. The main cleavage among the parties now seemed to be a more conventional one, along the lines separating the Left and the Right. The reelection of President Eanes allowed the PCP to surmount most of its legitimation problems within the democratic system.

Finally, the PCP was still growing while other major West European communist parties were losing votes or beginning to decline, in part as a result of a Soviet policy shift and changing Western perceptions about communism.[22] The fact that the Portuguese Communists continued to approve of every Soviet move—including the invasion of Afghanistan—did not seem to harm their electoral standing or to raise internal dissent, as happened in the other West European communist parties.[23] By 1980, the PCP was attracting the same percentage of voters as did the French Communist Party and was only behind the Italian one.[24] Given the Spanish Communist Party's debacle and the withering away of "Euro-communism," Portuguese Communists could well present their alternative as a viable and effective strategy for West European communist parties,[25] one that had served them well during the first turbulent years of Portuguese democracy.

First Turning Point

The 1980 legislative elections returned an AD majority. Just before the presidential election, however, Prime Minister Sá Carneiro was killed in an air crash, leaving the majority without effective leadership. The incumbent president, Eanes, with support from the Socialist Party and the PCP, defeated the AD candidate.

The main issue in the elections was how to bring the transition period to a close. The AD, above all, promoted revision of the constitution to remove from it the socialist provisions and the political role of the military. The PCP also attached great importance to the issue of constitutional revision since the revolutionary dimension of the 1976 constitution made it possible for the PCP to continue to claim that the Portuguese revolution was not over; at the same time, it allowed the party to participate in the democratic regime on its own terms.

With the defeat of the AD presidential candidate, the PCP seemed confident that the AD coalition could not survive for long,[26] and would ultimately be unable to push through constitutional revisions. Referring to the outcome of the elections, the PCP claimed that it had neutralized "at the very last moment" a sinister "reactionary plot."[27] By 1982, however, the situation had

[21]The PCP claimed to have 164,000 members in April 1979. See "Political Resolution" in *IX Congresso do Partido Comunista Português* (The 9th Congress of the Portuguese Communist Party), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1979, p. 335.

[22]See Timmermann, op. cit.; Lilly Marcou, *Les pieds d'argile. Le communisme mondial au présent. 1970–1986* (Feet of Clay. World Communism to the Present, 1970–1986), Paris, Ramsay, 1986; and Joan Barth Urban, "The Soviets and the Western European Communist Parties" in Herbert Ellison, Ed., *Soviet Policy Toward Western Europe*, Seattle, WA, The University of Washington Press, 1983, pp. 91–129.

[23]Alex MacLeod, "Portrait of a Model Ally: The Portuguese Communist Party and the International Communist Movement," *Studies in Comparative Communism* (Los Angeles, CA), No. 1, 1984, pp. 44–45.

[24]The PCF won 20.5 percent of the vote in the 1978 elections, before dropping to 16.1 percent in 1981; the PCI won 30.4 percent of the vote in the 1979 election. The PCP received 19.5 percent in the 1979 election, and 17.1 in the 1980 election. See Waller and Fennema, op. cit., p. 262.

[25]Timmermann, op. cit., pp. 124–25.

[26]Comité Central do PCP, *O PCP e a nova situação criada pela derrota da "AD" em 7 de Dezembro* (The PCP and the New Situation after the Defeat of the AD on December 7), Mimeo., Jan. 17, 1981, p. 18.

[27]Declaração do CC do PCP, "AD's Defeat and Democracy's Victory in the Presidential Election," *O Militante*, December 1980, p. 25.

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changed. Mário Soares entered into an agreement with the AD concerning the constitutional amendment and worked out a common platform with it. Consequently, the PCP united with President Eanes and the radical military in opposing the amendment, and concentrated on pressuring the Socialist Party.

In January 1982, Cunhal launched the Communist offensive against the proposed amendment, describing it as a coup d' état in the making.[28] The PCP mobilized its trade unions to bring down the government through two general strikes, but this proved unsuccessful. The party also called for early elections before the amendment could be put to a vote in parliament.[29] It called on Socialist deputies to break party discipline and vote against the revision law, causing a formal break in relations between the two parties. These efforts came to nothing: the amendment was passed in August 1982, with only the Communists voting against it.[30]

On the one hand, the PCP continued to claim that the amendment was part of a plot to restore an authoritarian regime. On the other hand, it stated that the "plotters" had been unable to attain all their objectives and that the constitution would continue to be a landmark of revolutionary achievement and a reference point rallying all "democratic forces"—including, naturally, the Communists.[31]

The first constitutional revision was decisive yet limited. It abolished those military revolutionary institutions that constrained pluralist democracy; in so doing, it brought the transition period to an end by abolishing the military's role as the guardian of the post-revolutionary regime. But the revision left the more revolutionary ideological dimensions of the constitution practically intact: pledging that socialism was the culmination of democracy, protecting the irreversibility of the revolutionary nationalizations, restricting private initiative in banking and industry in the name of the collective appropriation of the means of production, and even protecting nonexistent revolutionary institutions, such as those that were supposed to secure workers' control in the enterprises.

The revision was a major step toward the full "normalization" of the democratic regime; only the presence of a military man, who no longer held direct powers of command over the armed forces as President of the Republic, remained as a symbol of its revolutionary foundation. It was more and more difficult for the PCP to argue that the specificities of the Portuguese regime set it apart from other Western democracies, or to claim that the old revolution continued unabated. The Communist myth was wearing thin, even within party ranks.

The Communist leadership still expected that left-wing votes would punish the Socialist Party for its agreement with the Center-Right majority about the constitutional revision. In the elections of April 1983, however, the PSP came in first, with 36 percent of the vote, as against 18 percent for the PCP. The Socialists formed a coalition government with the Social-Democrats, with Mário Soares as prime minister.

Lost Opportunity

Perhaps the Communist Party's greatest failure in the course of the fight over the revision of the constitution was that it missed a second opportunity to engage in gradual change, to adapt itself to the reality of an institutionalized pluralist regime and the withdrawal of the military from politics. In 1976, such an adaptation would have entailed too many risks, because the groups on the extreme Left could have threatened the party's hold on its traditional supporters. In 1982 or 1983, however, the real risk was in going on with the rather empty ritualistic calls for mass mobilization against successive, and mostly imaginary, plots menacing what remained of the revolutionary legacy.

In the wake of the Polish crisis, the reforms in China, and the gradual accession to power of a post-Stalinist generation in the USSR, conditions in international communism also pointed to the need for moderate change. For its part, the PCP acknowledged that the "construction of socialism" was an uneven process, involving errors, the adoption of new strategies, and the renewal of communist leaderships.[32] Cunhal was prepared to admit this and the consequent need for some evolution in the PCP's leadership style. He also understood the need for rectification in the workstyle of the party cadres, which was still molded by their clandestine experience.[33] But he remained uncompromising

[28]Álvaro Cunhal, "Speech at the Friendship Meeting at Cova da Piedade," in *A Luta popular e a derrota da "AD." 1981–1982* (Popular Struggle and the AD's Defeat, 1981–1982), Vol. 2, Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1982, pp. 87–111; Cunhal, "Declaration to the Press on the Central Committee Meeting," May 18, 1982, in ibid, pp. 136–39.

[29]Álvaro Cunhal, "Statement on National Television," (Feb. 8, 1982), in ibid., pp. 11–17.

[30]While the PCP voted against the amendment, its formal declaration regarding its vote was worded rather ambiguously, reflecting internal dissension in the Communist parliamentary group.

[31]See the statement read by Carlos Brito, the leader of the communist parliamentary group, "Plenary Session of August 12, 1982," in *Diário da Assembleia da República* (Lisbon), Aug. 13, 1982, pp. 5578–82.

[32]See "Political Resolution," in *X Congresso do Partido Comunista Português* (The 10th Congress of the Portuguese Communist Party), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1983, p. 5. See also Álvaro Cunhal, "Opening Statement to the 10th Congress," in ibid., p. 20.

[33]Álvaro Cunhal, *O partido com paredes de vidro* (The Party Behind Glass Walls), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1985.

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on the central tenets of ideology and strategy, beginning with his thesis on the uninterrupted Portuguese revolution. According to Cunhal, facts had proven that this theory was right, and events would, in time, show that it had been worth waiting for a second revolutionary situation.[34]

The party's platform therefore continued to uphold the same general line on the Portuguese "revolutionary process" even as the party depicted democratic politics since 1976 as an apparently continual series of "counterrevolutionary" offensives thwarted only at the last minute.[35] The Communist leadership also remained relatively unchanged, and did not allow for any significant accretion of new members into its ranks. The PCP's leadership had become one of the most enduring and stable among communist parties: none of the members of the Secretariat or the Political Commission were replaced between 1963 and 1983, and no signs of dissent appeared among the leadership under Cunhal's rule. At the 1983 Congress, the Political Commission was enlarged by adding some younger cadres, including the last minute co-optation of Zita Seabra, one of the deputies who had pleaded for a positive vote on the constitutional amendment. None of these new members was given a position of real power. The Central Committee was also expanded to include a few elected officials and trade union members, but more than 90 percent of the Central Committee was made up of party functionaries.[36]

The PCP did not imitate the example of the French Communist Party's strategy of seeking a Left majority through cooperation with the Socialists. It persisted in accusing the PSP of being an accomplice of the worst enemies of Portuguese democracy. It was equally firm in defending those revolutionary institutions—in agrarian reform and in state enterprises—remaining in place since 1974–75. The PCP also steadfastly opposed Portuguese entry into the European Communities (EC).

Second Turning Point

During the two difficult years (1983–85) of the PSP-PSD coalition, Portugal's accession to the EC became a central issue in national politics. The government led by Mário Soares considered EC membership its first priority and presented it as essential to the consolidation of democracy. Entry into the Common Market was also a crucial issue for the PCP. The Communists systematically opposed every step leading Portugal toward the EC, from the 1972 accords to the 1977 application for full membership and all subsequent efforts to advance the ensuing negotiations.[37]

The PCP perceived accession to the EC as a political problem. At this time, Soviet policy opposed every form of West European integration, including the enlargement of the EC through the admission of Spain and Portugal. The Portuguese Communists, in contrast to their Italian and Spanish comrades, supported the Soviet line. The PCP opposed the 1972 accords, but later rationalized them as an acceptable status quo when Portugal sought full membership after 1977.[38] As the government emphasized the positive political implications of Portugal's accession in 1983, arguing that EC membership would strengthen Portuguese democracy, the PCP, alone among Portuguese parties, took the opposite view. It presented EC membership as an integral part of a conspiracy to destroy the political and economic legacy of the postrevolutionary regime.[39]

The matter also had important ideological consequences for the PCP. The party believed that EC membership would inevitably mean the restoration of "monopoly capitalism" with a multinational face. This possibility was an ironic twist on the 1975 decapitation of Portuguese capitalism. The revolutionary regime, expecting encirclement by hostile Western powers, took full state control of the economy. The regime spared foreign interests from nationalization, however, in order to delay (or not provoke) a Western boycott. The actual consequence of the policy on nationalization was that national capitalism stood unarmed and vulnerable vis-à-vis foreign capitalism. Thus the restoration of "monopoly capitalism" from without came to mean not only the destruction of the specific traits that made "Portuguese democracy" the most advanced of the Western regimes, but also the loss of Portugal's economic independence as the Communists saw it. Following the logic of the Communist thesis, the revolutionary efforts to detach Portugal from the West and to move it toward autarchy finally amounted to worse than the mere resto-

[34]Ibid, pp. 29–39.

[35]"Political Resolution," *X Congresso do Partido Comunista Português*, p. 8; and Álvaro Cunhal, "Opening Statement to the 10th Congress," ibid., pp. 22–26.

[36]See "Membership of the Central Committee Elected by the Congress," in ibid., pp. 337–39. See also Zita Seabra, *O nome das coisas* (Calling Things by Their Real Name), Lisbon, Publicações Europa-América, 1988, pp. 153–54.

[37]José Manuel Durão Barroso, *Le système politique portugais face à l'intégration européenne* (The Portuguese Political System in the Face of European Integration), Lisbon, APRI, 1983, pp. 111–14.

[38]See "Political Resolution," in *IX Congresso do Partido Comunista Português*, pp. 268–69, p. 292. See also Carlos Carvalhas "The Common Market," in ibid, pp. 98–99; and "Speech of Álvaro Cunhal," in *Não ao Mercado Comum* (Against the Common Market), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1980.

[39]Álvaro Cunhal, "The Struggle for an Alternative," *Revista Internacional* (Lisbon), No. 3, 1985, pp. 16–17; idem, "Opening Statement to the 10th Congress," *X Congresso do Partido Comunista Português*, p. 32.

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ration of the status quo ante 1974. The PCP could hardly be at ease with such an outcome. Therefore, its catastrophic expectations from Portugal's accession to the EC primarily reflected a deep internal ideological problem.

Nonetheless, the PCP could have accepted that Portugal's membership in the EC would soon be a fact. Instead, it tried to deny reality, arguing that the EC was unprepared to admit Portugal and Spain because of its own problems. When the signing of the treaty was already imminent, the PCP demanded that the government be dismissed; after the accession instruments were signed on July 12, 1985, the PCP called for parliament to be dissolved before it could ratify the accession treaty.[40]

As in the case of the constitutional revision, the PCP's efforts came to nothing. The party soon suffered a clear defeat in early elections held after parliament's ratification of Portugal's entry into the EC. The Communists once more shifted their position, demanding only that the treaties be renegotiated, and no longer asking that Portugal give up its status as a full member of the European Communities.[41]

The PCP achieved mixed results by following this strategy. Its insistence on the political significance of accession made everyone realize that EC membership represented a further step toward a stable, pluralist democracy, and away from the PCP's myth about the Portuguese revolution. At the same time, the PCP's opposition had a potentially significant payoff: the PCP, as the only major party to express reservations about membership, stood to gain politically among those adversely affected by the disruptive economic impact of joining the Common Market.

Brief Interval

The October 1985 parliamentary election gave the Communist Party a brief respite from the succession of defeats it had suffered, especially since 1982. Although the PCP lost votes, it claimed victory.[42] The PCP had some reason to do so, for the "new party" for which it had been calling since 1977 finally emerged from the conflict pitting the outgoing president, Ramalho Eanes, against the Socialist leader, Mário Soares. Soares had already announced that he would be a presidential candidate in the January 1986 election.

This new Party of Democratic Renewal (Partido Renovador Democrática—PRD), running with the incumbent president's blessing, took 18 percent of the vote, while the PSP dropped from 36 to 20 percent, and the PCP from 18 to 15 percent.[43] This major redistribution of the left-wing vote made the PSD the largest party, even though it gained only a marginal increase (from 27 to 29 percent) in its percentage of the vote. Because the left-wing parties were extremely divided, the PSD was able to form a single-party minority government under Cavaço Silva.

The PCP concentrated its attacks on the Socialist Party, and paid little attention to the PSD minority government. In the Communist scheme of things, the PSP had finally been punished by the electorate for its repeated "betrayals." The PSP was now encircled by the PRD and the PCP, so that it would either be crushed in a pincer movement or it would have to agree to a Left majority in which it would count for less than its two adversaries combined. This would not endanger the PCP's strategy for Left hegemony, as the Communists took the trouble to classify the PRD somewhat esoterically as a "democratic party of the non-Left."[44] Thus, the PCP would dominate the Left, and its "non-Left" allies would help finish off the PSP as a major party, while at the same time making sure that the "democratic forces" would retain a parliamentary majority.

For the next three months, the Communist leadership probably thought that, at last, it would be possible to reverse the gradual stabilization of the democratic regime. The main obstacle to this reversal had been the moderate policies of the PSP, now threatened by the latest electoral returns. The PRD, however heterogeneous, was fundamentally under the authority of President Eanes and his military allies: ideally, the PRD could signify the revival of the Armed Forces Movement, and the restoration of a political role for the military through party politics.

For a brief interval, it seemed possible that the old alliance of the PCP and the radical military (the break-up of which had doomed the PCP's victory plans in 1975) would once again become the dominant force in Portuguese politics. The PRD and the PCP agreed on a strong presidential candidate, Francisco Salgado Zenha, to run against the Socialist Party leader Mário

[40]"Proclamation of the National Conference," *O Militante*, No. 119, 1985, p. 8.

[41]See *Avante!*, Aug. 29, 1985; *Programa eleitoral do PCP. Eleições para a Assembleia da Rèpublica de 6 de Outubro de 1985* (Electoral Program of the PCP. Elections to the Assembly of the Republic on October 6, 1985), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1985, pp. 39–40.

[42]Álvaro Cunhal, "Statement to the Mass Media," Oct. 11, 1985, in *A falência da política de direita do PS (1983–1985)* (The Failure of the PS Rightist Politics [1983–1985]), Vol. II, Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1985, pp. 580–83.

[43]The PRD won 1 million votes, a little more than the total of the more than 800,000 votes lost by the PS and the 130,000 votes lost by the PCP.

[44]This classification was formulated by Ángelo Veloso, a member of the PCP Political Commission.

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Soares.[45] Zenha, a socialist whose prestige was second only to that of Soares, started with an advantage over his rival: together the PRD and PCP received more votes than the PSP in the legislative election.

It was a singularly important moment for the Communist Party, because a victory by Zenha against Soares would make almost everything possible once again. Cunhal had never hidden the fact that the PSP leader was his bête noire. Cunhal had made it clear that the presidential election was to be the moment of truth as early as 1983, when the PCP Congress passed a resolution pledging never to support Soares's bid for the presidency, whatever the circumstances.[46]

The Last Straw

Mário Soares won the first round of the presidential election. The PRD-PCP candidate finished third, behind Soares and the right-wing candidate, CDS leader Freitas do Amaral. The run-off matched Soares and Amaral, who was backed by the PSD and the Christian-Democrats.

In light of these developments, the PCP convened an extraordinary congress in February 1986. The sole purpose of this congress was to hear Cunhal admit, for the first time in public, that he had been wrong when he had categorically stated that the Communists would never back Soares for president. The congress then announced the decision to support Soares, in order to prevent a victory of the rightist candidate.[47]

Cunhal must have doubted whether Soares was really the lesser of the two evils, especially after Soares was elected President of the Republic a few days after the Congress, but the General Secretary had little choice but to back him. At least his support of Soares assured Cunhal that Communist voters would not cast their ballots for Soares contrary to party directives, that he would not have to face internal dissent over this issue, and that he was avoiding outcries from other West European communist parties.

Still, this decision did not solve any of the PCP's problems. Its strategy had failed, and so had that of the PRD. It was useless to foster any further illusions in the aftermath of the presidential election. Portuguese democracy now had a civilian president; the PSP felt confident once again and less tempted to become radicalized; and the PRD was no longer under anybody's control, as its internal strife increased after the defeat.

Worse, the Communists' allies were becoming tired of revolutionary illusions. The auxiliary forces of the PCP—the MDP, its satellite party, and the CGTP-IN trade unions—were starting to adapt themselves to the hard facts of political reality. When Cunhal decided—alone, as it seems—to call for the government's dismissal in September 1986,[48] he was faced by open disagreement from the MDP, which refused for the first time to follow the PCP's line.[49] The PCP had consistently demanded the dismissal of nine of the 10 govern-

Francisco Salgado Zenha, candidate of the Portuguese Communist Party and the Party of Democratic Renewal in the 1986 Portuguese presidential election, won by Mário Soares.

—Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos.

[45]This was a slow and painful process, and Cunhal later blamed President Eanes for taking so long to decide on a candidate. See Álvaro Cunhal, "Opening Statement," in *XI Congresso (extraordinário)* (The Extraordinary 11th Congress), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, 1986, p. 21; idem, *Intervenção de Álvaro Cunhal* (Álvaro Cunhal's Speech), XII Congresso do PCP, mimeo, Dec. 1, 1988, p. 23.

[46]"Political Resolution," in *X Congresso do Partido Comunista Português*, p. 47; Álvaro Cunhal, "Opening Speech to the 10th Congress," ibid., pp. 39–40.

[47]Álvaro Cunhal, "Opening Speech," *XI Congresso (extraordinário)*, pp. 22–27.

[48]A few days later, the Central Committee met and endorsed Cunhal's position.

[49]*Diário de Notícias* (Lisbon), Nov. 7, 1986.

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ments since 1976, and the MDP had always supported the demand. Its refusal to do so in this instance was therefore unexpected. The resulting polemics between the two allies went on until the coalition they had first formed 10 years earlier broke up.[50] Although the PCP re-formed a coalition with MDP elements who left the old "democratic" front,[51] the split with the MDP was a clear sign of rebellion and a reflection of internal dissent demanding "renewal" of the PCP.[52]

Immediately after the split, six well-known party figures, including veteran member and former minister Veiga de Oliveira, presented the General Secretary with a memorandum demanding that a congress of the party be convened at the earliest possible date to deal with the outstanding strategic and internal issues.[53] This was the first formal step of the internal opposition, but one that had no immediate consequences, as it remained unpublicized.

At this time, the PRD introduced a motion of censure against the minority government—a motion passed with the votes of the PSP and the PCP. The government fell and President Soares unexpectedly called an election for July 19, 1987. Neither the PSP nor the PCP was anxious to face an election at the time. For once, the Communist Party did not call for the dissolution of parliament and opposed the president's decision to call for a general election.[54]

The PCP received a share of the vote that marked a post-1975 low: 12 percent.[55] The party retreated to its

[50]The PCP and MDP were part of the FEPU during the 1976 election; since the 1979 election, they have been part of the APU. See fn. 13.

[51]Those who left the MDP formed the Democratic Intervention (Intervenção Democrática—ID) and then—prior to the 1987 election—joined the PCP and the Green Party to form the United Democratic Coalition (Coligação Democrática Unitária—CDU).

[52]*Diário de Notícias*, Dec. 2, 1986.

[53]This document remains confidential. It was presented by Veiga de Oliveira, a senior member of the group, who had served in the Central Committee (until 1983) and had been a Communist minister in the provisional governments and a parliamentary deputy; Vital Moreira, the party's leading constitutionalist, who had served as a deputy and had been a judge in the Constitutional Court; Silva Graça and Silva Marques, former provisional government members; and Sousa Marques and Dulce Martins.

[54]The PCP proposed that the PSP and the PRD join it in forming a "democractic government." See *Avante!*, Apr. 2, Apr. 16, and May 7, 1987; see also *O Diário* (Lisbon), June 6, 1987.

[55]In 1989, the CDU coalition received fewer votes than had the PCP alone in 1975.

President of Parliament Fernando Amaral administers the oath of office to President-elect Mário Soares (right) on March 9, 1986, as the outgoing president, Romalho Eanes, watches.

—Reuters/Bettmann Newsphotos.

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traditional strongholds, becoming again more a regional than a national party. More than 60 percent of the PCP's votes came from Lisbon's industrial belt and the Alentejo; the party was almost wiped out in the more rural areas and on the Atlantic islands.[56] The PCP's electoral strength after 1979 had gone steadily down; it lost 45 percent of its electorate.[57]

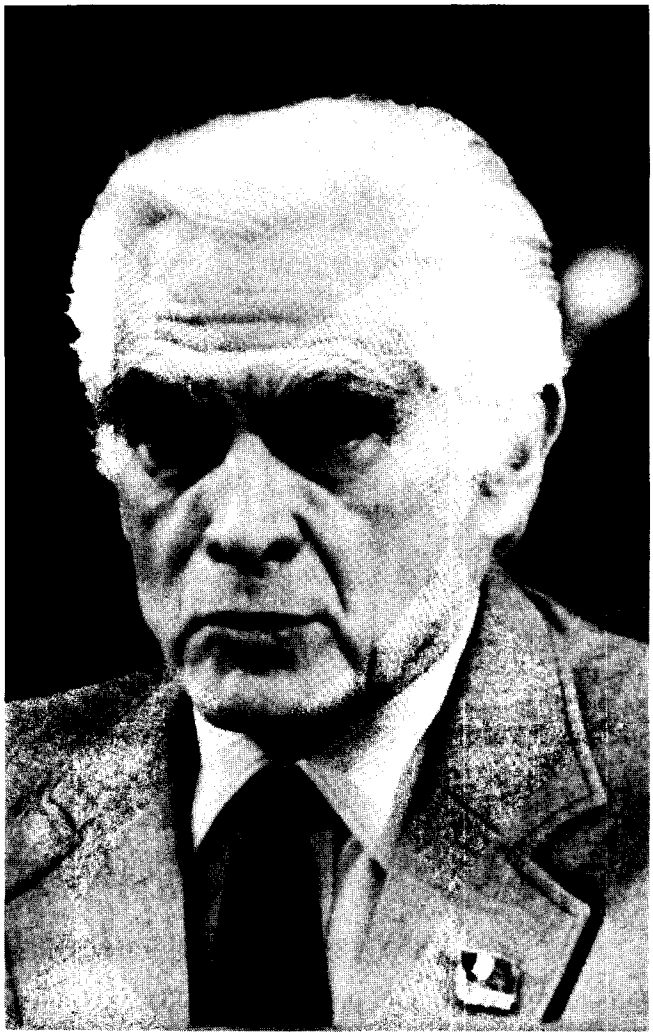
In contrast, the PSP was able to hold on to its electorate, and to move again to a 10-percentage point advantage over the PCP. The PRD's share fell to 4 percent of the vote, thus confirming the utter defeat it had suffered during the presidential election. Finally, for the first time, a single party had an absolute majority: the PSD received 50 percent of the vote, which made it very improbable that its government would fall from power before 1991.

In a sense, this was the last straw for the PCP. Its alliance strategy had failed; it had lost every fight over a major issue in national politics; and its myth of the Portuguese revolution was shattered, because pluralist democracy had shown its staying power. The PSD and the PSP were even preparing for a second revision of the constitution, to eliminate the ideological remnants of the revolutionary legacy.

With Soares as president, a large single-party parliamentary majority, and the PSP as the main opposition party, no political crisis was in sight for the first time since 1976. The PCP's ideological petrification, its internal ossification, and its rigid long-term strategy had been obscured by Portugal's political and economic instability. As long as uncertainty prevailed, the Communist Party was able to strengthen its position and to grow as an electoral and mass party. Later, as stability increased, the PCP was able to control its gradual and relative decline, avoiding, like the PCI, the pattern of abrupt decline of the PCF. After the July 19, 1987, election, however, it was the Communist Party itself that seemed to be vulnerable to an internal political crisis. The PCP's Central Committee apparently thought so because it unexpectedly decided to convene a party congress.[58]

The Communist Crisis

The PCP announced that its 12th Congress would take place in early 1988, but the congress was later postponed until December.[59] Three different problems—the rapid changes in the Soviet Union, the stability of Portuguese democracy, and the question of leadership succession—threatened to merge into one massive crisis, leading to a paralysis of the PCP.[60]



Álvaro Cunhal speaks at a November 1987 celebration of the 70th anniversary of the Bolshevik Revolution in the Kremlin Palace of Congresses in Moscow.

—Sovfoto.

The extensive changes in international commu-

[56]The electoral districts with the greatest concentration of loyal PCP voters comprised 34 percent of the total electorate. The party had less then 5 percent of the vote in every rural district except one, 2.3 percent of the vote in the Azores, and 1.9 percent in the Madeira islands.

[57]The PCP received 1,121,000 votes in 1979, but only 685,000 votes in 1987.

[58]*Avante!*, July 24, 1987.

[59]Ibid. See also ibid., Feb. 26, 1988.

[60]For a discussion of the early stages of the communist crisis see Vasco Rato, "The PCP: Anatomy of a Crisis," *Risco* (Lisbon), No. 9, 1988, pp. 55–70; Candida Ventura, "The Communist Party of Portugal And *Perestroyka*," *Est et Ouest* (Paris), April 1988; Carlos Gaspar, "The Desert of the Tartars Revisited," *Risco*, No. 10, 1988, pp. 49–65; and Kevin Devlin, "Portuguese CP Rebels Inspired by Gorbachev," in Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty (hereafter, RFE-RL), *Radio Free Europe Research* (Munich), Background Report No. 234, Nov. 23, 1987.

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nism[61] were late in making their effects felt on the PCP.[62] Since the beginning of Mikhail Gorbachev's efforts at *perestroyka,* Portuguese Communists had seemed increasingly incapable and unwilling to adjust, as they had always done in the past, to the latest change in Soviet policy. Although the PCP carefully avoided direct public criticism of any ruling communist party, it was notably silent on major internal Soviet changes. It characterized *perestroyka* as a way to consolidate party rule rather than as a "revolutionary stage in the construction of socialism."[63] Like the East German communists, the PCP stressed that each party followed its own "national path" toward "socialism" and need not follow the Soviet model.[64] In so doing, the PCP was being consistent with its strongly orthodox line, yet departing somewhat from its previous sectarian pattern of unconditional alignment with the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. This situation was too disturbing to be openly acknowledged, so the PCP leaders told party officials to regard Gorbachev's policies as a cunning ploy to confuse and divide the USSR's Western adversaries.[65] As the CPSU abandoned old feuds with its communist opponents, such as the PCI, and its search for a multilateral framework to strengthen its leadership over other communist parties,[66] the PCP lost its status as Moscow's model ally. Cunhal, whose political authority partly derived from his standing in the Soviet Union, also lost personal authority when it was clear that, after Mikhail Suslov's death (1982) and Boris Ponomarev's retirement (1986), he no longer enjoyed his old privileged access to the CPSU's leadership.

The ideological and strategic problem concerned mainly the PCP's unwillingness to depart from its definition of the "democratic and national revolution" or from its long-term strategy of opposing pluralist democracy. The PCP had sought hegemony over the Left through the neutralization of the Socialist Party. From the Communist perspective it was the PSP's unwillingness to follow the PCP's lead that threatened to spell the death of the Portuguese revolution. The suspicion of pluralist democracy and the efforts to neutralize the Socialists were two sides of the same coin. The core of "professional revolutionaries" who had led the party since the exciting days of clandestine activity was still unprepared to come to terms with the dullness of parliamentary politics. Cunhal's passion for Leninism had also led him to claim a unique totalitarian potential for his country and to become convinced that a Western-style democracy had no place in Portuguese political development.[67] The PCP adopted Cunhal's main thesis at his formal elevation to general secretary in 1965, but 10 years of democracy had eroded the Communists' faith in the PCP's myth about the Portuguese revolution. If the PCP was to regain credibility and contain its all too visible decline, it had to change its general line.

The third problem concerned the succession to Cunhal, who would be 75 years old in November 1988. He had been the party's chief strategist since the 1940's and its general secretary since the 1960's. The replacement of the old guard had become a general trend in other Western communist parties, and Cunhal was one of the oldest active communist party leaders in Western Europe. The succession problem had come up on the party's agenda since the 1983 Congress; Cunhal tried to sidestep the issue by declaring that there was no statutory requirement to have a general secretary and that the party would do very well without one after his departure.[68] This made the problem more acute, proving that Cunhal, too, was unable to find anyone in the PCP leadership who could step into his place.

Because the three problems were connected, they created a general crisis for the party. The relative stability of Portuguese democracy and the demolition of so many of the pillars of Leninism by the Soviet leaders, the custodians of the faith, undermined ideological orthodoxy. Cunhal thus lacked a clear reference point to proceed with a revision of the party's program. The very ideological sectarianism that had been the cornerstone of the PCP's subordination to the CPSU now put the Portuguese Communists in an awkward position. They were criticized both for being dependent on the CPSU and for being incapable of changing their internal rules and ideological dogmatism to conform to Gorbachev's *perestroyka.* The PCP's opposition to an alliance with the PSP or to Portugual's membership in the EC no longer corresponded to the priorities of Soviet foreign policy in the West and seemed to condemn the PCP to further isolation. Cunhal was at the heart of the problem because he had ruled the party for so long and was its leading theorist.

[61]See Timmermann, op. cit. See also Zbigniew Brzezinski, *The Grand Failure: The Birth and Death of Communism in the Twentieth Century,* New York, Charles Scribner's Sons, 1989.

[62]See Timmermann, op.cit., and Waller and Fennema, op. cit.

[63]Questioned about the party's initial silence, Cunhal dismissed the entire matter by calling it a matter of semantics. "Interview with Álvaro Cunhal," *Politica* (Lisbon), No. 2, 1988.

[64]*Avante!,* Dec. 3, 1987. Cunhal took the same line at the PCF Congress; see ibid., Dec. 10, 1987.

[65]As reported by Zita Seabra, *O nome das coisas,* p. 53.

[66]See for instance Gorbachev's interview with *l'Unità,* May 20, 1987, translated in *Boletim de informação* (Prague) August 1987, pp. 16–40.

[67]This position was explicit in 1975; see Álvaro Cunhal, "Speech at the Campo Pequeno Meeting," June 28, 1975, in *Com o PCP para a unidade popular rumo ao socialismo* (With the PCP, for Popular Unity Toward Socialism), Lisbon, Ediçãoes Avante!, 1975, pp. 48–49.

[68]See Cunhal, *O partido com paredes de vidro,* pp. 87–88. See also "Interview with Álvaro Cunhal," loc. cit., p. 62.

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This complex situation might have been avoided if the Communist Party had not missed every opportunity for changing its program and strategy, or if it had just followed the pattern of unconditional allegiance to the CPSU. It would have been easier to deal with each problem one at a time before they could to combine into a single major crisis.

Even after the July 19, 1987, debacle, it still would have been possible to contain the crisis. However, a seemingly irresistible inertia—or a serious miscalculation—led Cunhal to make minor concessions to the internal opposition, such as convening the party congress or allowing the CGTP-IN to join the Council for Social Concertation.[69] Cunhal took back some of the concessions as early as December 1987, when the Central Committee postponed the congress.[70] He wanted first to see if there would be a second constitutional revision, before being forced to admit defeat on retaining the last official residue of the revolution's legacy. Cunhal was unwilling to change the party's program before the last traces of the fundamental law's revolutionary dimension had been revoked.[71]

Dissent in the Ranks

With the postponement of the party congress, the internal opposition in the party went on the offensive. It publicized its position in the national press, in open defiance of party rules. From that moment, the Communist crisis ceased to be merely an internal party issue.

Before the publication of the Communist opposition documents starting in January 1988,[72] the internal group that formed around six well-known party members and Zita Seabra, an alternate member of the PCP's Political Commission,[73] had concentrated its efforts on a strategy of inducing change from above. The six had presented their position papers to Cunhal and separately held talks with him, convinced that only the General Secretary had the needed authority to impose change on an extremely orthodox and monolithic party. After the postponement, however, it was clear that this strategy had failed. Seeing no other viable course, the group decided to challenge publicly the party's leadership, because it had refused to present the opposition's views even to the Central Committee.[74] With this act, they emerged as an internal fraction, and changed the nature of the party's crisis.

The political positions of this renewal fraction[75] were never very clearly stated and were radical only by the standards of the PCP. The six talked of "Marxism and Leninism" instead of "Marxism-Leninism," but did not question Leninism. They asked for the study of other parties' experiences, even those, such as the PCI (unmentioned in the request), that were anathema to the leadership. The reformers called for the "actualization" of the party program, put the term "democratic and national revolution" in quotation marks but without further analyzing the implications.[76] The fraction criticized the party's failure to accept pluralist democracy without reservation, rather than waiting for a second opportunity to relive the Portuguese revolution. They rejected the anti-Socialist policies of the party and argued that its outdated strategies, including its resistance to the constitutional amendments and to Portugal's membership in the EC, had led to the decline of the PCP. They identified with Mikhail Gorbachev's policies of *perestroyka* and *glasnost'* and were quite prepared to demonstrate how different the PCP's orthodoxy was from this latest Soviet line.[77]

The renewal fraction was somewhat bolder in its proposals regarding internal democratization of the PCP. The initial proposals related to the organization of the party congress. The fraction asked for the election of a special committee that would take the organization of the congress away from the party Secretariat, called for secret balloting in the election of the Congress delegates and the Central Committee, and demanded the right to put forward candidates for those elections.[78]

Later, the renewal fraction presented its proposals for the amendment of the party's constitution. The reformers demanded that the institution of party general secretary be added to those of the Political Commis-

[69]In 1984, the CGTP-IN had refused to join the Council for Social Concertation, because this meant recognizing its rival, the UGT, which was also represented on the Council. Moreover, "social concertation" was difficult to reconcile with the principle of "class struggle," professed by the Communist unions.

[70]In December, the PCP refused to set a specific date for the 12th Congress, until the issue of the second constitutional amendment was resolved. *Avante!*, Dec. 17, 1987.

[71]Ibid.

[72]*O Jornal* (Lisbon), Jan. 15, 1988. The document that was leaked had been prepared for the Central Committee meeting of Dec. 10, 1987. It was reprinted in Documentos dos "seis" (Documents of the "Six"), *Para a renovação do PCP* (For the PCP's Renewal), Lisbon, 1988, pp. 3–12.

[73]Although a member of the inner group, Zita Seabra did not sign the documents, because at the time she was still an official of the PCP.

[74]*O Jornal*, Jan. 15, 1988.

[75]The press referred to the "six" as the "critics." The group itself preferred to be called the "six," although they chose to refer to themselves as proponents of "renewal" when they presented their position to the party congress. They were indeed a fraction, which, in Leninist terms, meant an organized group within the Communist Party, with its own leadership.

[76]Documentos dos "seis," op. cit. pp. 3–8.

[77]See Zita Seabra, *O nome das coisas*; *Diário de Notícias*, June 7, 1988; *Diário de Lisboa*, May 17, June 7, and July 12, 1988.

[78]Documents dos "seis," op. cit., pp. 7–8.

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sion and Secretariat as a "mandatory executive body"[79] and that an honorary commission be created into which older leaders could retire. They did not suggest a specific age for retirement, as Cunhal was the oldest of the party's leaders. They also advocated that every party member have the right to initiate proposals and that minority positions within the party on specific issues be sanctioned.[80] These demands obviously challenged both Cunhal and the principle of democratic centralism by which the Secretariat ran the party, but they fell short of truly radical measures. For instance, there was no demand to dismantle the cell structure or any assertion of the right to organize minority currents.[81]

In a sense, the very fact of the renewal fraction's existence was more important than the rather timid positions it actually adopted. The emergence of a fraction raised the specter of a split, all the more since it would have involved one of the party's leaders. This menace haunted Cunhal, who was obsessed with the fragmentation of the Spanish Communist Party and knew that the CPSU had backed splinter groups in Spain.[82]

Cunhal was thus inclined to act with great caution. As the renewal fraction emerged into the open, his initial response was defensive and low-key: he belittled the internal crisis and did not even denounce the six as a fraction, so as not to be forced to expel them. Instead, his first move was the removal of Zita Seabra from the party's leadership. At the same time, Cunhal tried to isolate his opponents by partially adopting their proposals. Thus, in February, the party's Central Committee announced that the congress would take place on December 1, 1988. At its next meeting, the Central Committee expelled Zita Seabra from the Political Commission, but not from the Central Committee.[83] It also announced that the congress would adopt a new party program.[84]

This response did not intimidate the renewal fraction. Its members denounced the dismissal of Zita Seabra,[85] contrasting the "administrative methods" of the PCP with Gorbachev's flexibility in dealing with internal dissent. They also published their proposals on the party's internal democratization.[86] At this juncture, a second renewal current came into being: the "Third Way" (*Terceira Via*) group.[87] This group was, in Leninist terms, a faction and not a fraction.[88] It merely voiced the views of intellectual Communist circles that supported many of the original positions of the six, but did not approve of their strategy or their open challenge to the party's leadership.[89] In a sense, the "Third Way" represented both a force for the PCP's *aggiornamento* along the lines of Soviet *perestroyka*[90] and a way of isolating the less conciliatory renewal fraction. The "Third Way" effectively divided what might have been a larger renewal current, one that might have included a number of trade union leaders and Communist mayors. The General Secretary took full advantage of the divisions in the opposition to set forth a new party program and minor amendments to the party's constitution,[91] and so recover the political initiative.

The 12th Congress

While he was restoring his control over the PCP on the eve of the 12th Congress, Cunhal naturally did not impose on the party the changes demanded by the internal opposition. But he did not entirely miss this opportunity for changing some of the party's more vulnerable political and ideological positions and its internal balance.

Ideological change was concerned first and foremost with the issue of the Portuguese revolution. The "democractic and national revolution" was declared to be "unfinished."[92] This formula was open to two different interpretations: it could signify either that the revolution still awaited its final completion, or that it would be left unfinished for good.[93] In any case, the party's

[79]The PCP's constitution refers to the Secretariat and Political Commission as "mandatory executive bodies." It defines to the position of general secretary as optional. The opposition wanted the position of general secretary to be a "mandatory executive body." and not as an option available to the Secretariat. See "Statutes," in *X Congresso do Partido Comunista Português*, Art. 29, op. cit., p. 237.

[80]Documentos dos "seis," op. cit., pp 26–34.

[81]For the sake of comparison see, e.g., Gianfranco Pasquino, "Mid-stream and Under Stress. The Italian Communist Party," in Waller and Fennema, op. cit., pp. 33–35.

[82]See Eusebio Mujal-Leon, "Decline and Fall of Spanish Communism," *Problems of Communism*, March-April 1986, pp. 1–27. See also José Pacheco Pereira, "The CPSU and the 'Parallel Parties'—The Spanish Case," *Estudos sobre o comunismo* (Lisbon), January 1986, pp. 3–50.

[83]*Avante!*, May 7, 1988.

[84]Ibid.

[85]See the statements by Vital Moreira et al., published in *Diário de Notícias*, May 7, 1988, and *Expresso*, May 7, 1988. See also *Diário de Lisboa*, May 9, 1988.

[86]Documentos dos "seis," op. cit.

[87]The "Third Way" group included some prominent figures, such as José Saramago, Gomes Canotilho, António Hespanha, and Borges de Carvalho. This group presented a document to Aurélio Santos, a major party official in Lisbon. The text of the document was later leaked to the press. See *Diário de Lisboa*, June 27, 1988.

[88]On the distinction between a fraction and a faction in Leninist organizations see Michael Waller, "Democratic Centralism," in Waller and Fennema, op. cit, pp. 12–13.

[89]*Diário de Lisboa*, June 27, 1989.

[90]Ibid.

[91]*Avante!*, July 21, 1988.

[92]Ibid.

[93]Ibid. For a critical analysis of the renewal fraction, see Alex Nemo in *Diário de Lisboa*, Oct. 1 and 8, 1988. See also Documentos dos "seis," op. cit., pp. 45–52.

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stance on the revolution was obscured, at least for the time being, by this ambiguous compromise. The program made no further references to the old revolutionary stage; in its stead, the party's main objective for the near future would be the achievement of an "advanced democracy," an intermediate stage before "socialism" proper could become the order of the day.[94] This revision was performed in an oblique manner. The PCP did not specifically renounce its previous description of Portuguese democracy as the most advanced among the West European regimes, nor did it specifically renounce the "dictatorship of the proletariat," which had been deleted from the program only for semantic reasons.[95] The description of the coming "advanced democracy," which followed closely the wording of the Portuguese constitution, did not mention the acceptance of the principle that governments change in accordance with electoral results.[96] Finally, the program came to terms with Portugal's status as a member of the EC, abandoning previous demands for the renegotiation of the treaties and the PCP's former predictions about the catastrophic consequences that membership in the European Communities would bring. The program did not, however, renounce either its reservations about the perils to national independence of membership in the EC and other Western organizations or its opposition to the supranational trends in the European Communities.[97]

These ambiguities and omissions notwithstanding, Cunhal managed to respond with some success to the more salient ideological and political issues raised within the party. His new program was flat and unimaginative compared with the previous one, but it served its purpose of blunting the renewal fraction's offensive in this domain. The concessions did not, however, touch any of the fundamental tenets of orthodox Marxism-Leninism. The program did not disavow the possibility of armed revolution, nor did it touch upon democratic centralism. In fact, the amendments to the party's constitution reaffirmed the "center's" authority explicitly, inserted harsher measures against "fractionalism," and retained the office of general secretary as an optional executive body.[98] At the same time, the program announced the creation of a Control Commission,[99] suggesting that Cunhal was ready to retire some of the party's veterans, but *only* after it became clear that he himself was "irreplaceable" and would remain in his office.[100]

The problem of relations with the CPSU was somewhat more complicated. Cunhal may have been waiting for a reversal of trends in the Soviet Union, but in September it was obvious that Gorbachev was consolidating his position.[101] In these circumstances, it was wiser to rally around the winners, so the PCP's leadership made some gestures to open up the internal debate[102] and officially recognized *perestroyka* as a "revolutionary process."[103]

Cunhal was now ready to move forcefully against the internal opposition, denouncing all its currents in strong terms, and making an example of Zita Seabra in the old style by expelling her from the Central Committee.[104] It became clear that the General Secretary was in control of the party and that none of the renewal currents had the strength or support in the party needed to mount an effective alternative to the leadership during the congress. The renewal fraction had even less of a chance of splitting the party, a strategy that it had explicitly refused to follow before the congress.[105]

Changes in the party's internal power structure were revealed only at the congress. These included the replacement of 46 members of the Central Committee, including veteran cadres, who were too close to the renewal currents or who had failed to demonstrate the proper attitude in the course of the campaign against Zita Seabra and her companions. In their place, the leadership nominated 53 new members, mostly party functionaries.[106] At the top, some of the older members

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[94]*Projecto de Programa do PCP. Portugal: uma democracia avançada no limiar do século XXI* (Draft Program of the PCP. Portugal: An Advanced Democracy on the Threshold of the 21st Century—henceforth cited as *Projecto de program do PCP*), Lisbon, Edição da SIP do PCP, September 1988, pp. 18–19.

[95]The reference to the "dictatorship of the proletariat" was removed from the party's program at the 1974 Congress, because the word "dictatorship" had negative connotations. See Zita Seabra, *O nome das coisas*, p. 87

[96]*Projecto De Programa do PCP*, pp. 22–29.

[97]Ibid., pp. 17–18. See also *Portugal e a CEE hoje* (Portugal and the EEC Today), Lisbon, Edições Avante!, June 1988.

[98]*Avante!*, July 21, 1988. See also *Projecto de alterações dos Estatutos do PCP* (Draft Amendments of the PCP Statutes), Lisbon, Edição da SIP do PCP September 1988, Arts. 21 and 37, pp. 17–19.

[99]See *Projecto de alteraçoes*, p. 18.

[100]The assertion that Cunhal was irreplaceable was made by Octávio Pato. See *Diário de Lisboa*, Aug. 23, 1988.

[101]By allowing PCP commentators to dispute in print that Yegor Ligachev's reassignment from ideological to agricultural matters represented a demotion, the party implied that profound changes were taking place in the CPSU. See *O Diário*, Oct. 4, 1988.

[102]The party weekly, *Avante!*, began an open forum for debate beginning on Oct. 7, 1988.

[103]Cunhal was less enthusiastic, calling *perestroyka* a "process of transformation and advancement of the socialist society," an "audacious and courageous process of struggle, like any truly revolutionary process." See *Proposta de resolução política do XII Congresso do PCP* (Regarding the Political Resolution of the 12th Congress), November 1988, p. 6; and *Intervenção de Alvaro Cunhal, XII Congresso do PCP* (Speech by Álvaro Cuhhal. 12th PCP Congress), mimeo, p. 5.

[104]See *Avante!*, Nov. 17, 1988. See also Zita Seabra, *O nome das coisas*, pp. 25–71, and *Independente* (Lisbon), Nov. 18, 1988.

[105]See *O Jornal*, Nov. 18, 1988.

[106]*Avante!*, Dec. 5, 1988.

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of the party's Secretariat were retired to the newly-formed Control Commission. The Political Commission was first enlarged, bringing in younger members, and then restricted in its powers, as an Executive Political Commission came into being.[107] The real change came, however, when the party all but abandoned the previous model of overlapping membership in the Secretariat and the Political Commission. Cunhal and Domingos Abrantes, his trusted aide, were the only two members to retain their previous status as members of all executive bodies.[108] This move was an unprecedented concentration of power in the hands of the General Secretary and, at the same time, a blow against all those who until then had been, from a formal standpoint, in line for the succession.[109] With this move, Cunhal made sure that there would be no General Secretary after him.

With a single exception, none of the Central Committee members even remotely connected with the renewal fraction retained on the committee, nor were any of the more compliant figures of the "Third Way" faction able to get into this body. Members of both currents were presented as candidates to the Central Committee during a closed session of the Congress: none received more than 20 votes from the more than 2,000 delegates. The few opposition delegates[110] who addressed the congress had each one of their proposals turned down, revealing how minute the strength of the renewal currents was inside the party and how effective the iron hand of the Secretariat could be. Their cold reception was also a sign of how deeply orthodox and sectarian positions were entrenched among the party's rank and file and an indication of how unwilling the majority of the delegates was to accept pluralism, even in this limited form. In this sense, the first strategy of the renewal fraction—changing the party from above—was the only effective one, but they could not get it implemented. The second strategy had had a cathartic effect, resulting in partial, controlled ideological adjustments, the retirement of part of the old guard, and the isolation of the more outspoken renewal currents within the PCP. This strategy, however, had destroyed the party's image as a stable monolith and, to some extent, broken its former monolithism.

Zita Seabra, who was removed from responsibilities as alternate member of the Political Commission of the Portuguese Communist Party in early 1988 and from Central Committee membership at the 12th PCP Congress for her participation in a renewal fraction opposed to the line of General Secretary Álvaro Cunhal.

—O Jornal.

To be sure, Cunhal had some help in bringing this severe crisis under control. The PSP made a point of not interfering in the Communist crisis, leaving the internal opposition without external backing. The CPSU came out on Cunhal's side, sending Vadim Medvedev as its representative to the congress[111] to deliver a strong lecture on *perestroyka* and thank "all Portuguese communists" for their support of Soviet policies.[112] It was to

[107]Ibid. The enlarged Political Commission had 22 members; the newly-created Executive Political Commission had 8 members, 2 of whom had not been on the Political Commission.

[108]Ibid. Abrantes, a member of the Secretariat and the Political Commission since 1979, was in charge of the trade unions. He was entrusted with building the case against Zita Seabra.

[109]This pertained especially to Octávio Pato and Carlos Costa.

[110]According to reports sympathetic to the opposition, there were 20 to 50 opposition delegates in the 2,000-member Congress. Twelve members voted against the party's program, and 12 abstained. Voting was conducted by a show of hands during an open session of the congress. See *Europeu* (Lisbon), Dec. 5, 1988. Kevin Devlin sets the number of opposition delegates at 30. See Kevin Devlin, "The Communist Movement in 1988," RFE-RL, *Radio Free Europe Research,* Background Report No. 249, Dec. 30, 1988, p. 3.

[111]Previous representatives were fairly high-level officials—Boris Ponomarev in 1976, Eduard Shevardnadze in 1979, Mikhail Gorbachev in 1983.

[112]The official transcipt issued by the Congress did not contain the reference to *all* Portuguese Communists. See *XII Congresso do Partido Comunista Portugués* (The 12th Congress of the Portuguese Communist Party), No. 041 P, mimeo, p. 8.

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the General Secretary's credit that he contained the crisis, even though the PCP's standing in Moscow was no longer what it had once been. The succession problem, however, remained unresolved.

Limited Decline

In relative terms, the PCP could claim that its losses since 1983 were moderate. More than a third of its voters were gone, but there had been no abrupt downturn and the party did not fall below its 1975 mark. The official membership numbers proved that the party could no longer make up for losses with new recruits, that it had fewer members under 30 years of age and more members over 50.[113] But the PCP remained a very large party, second only to the PCI among Western communist parties in membership and voters.[114] After the creation of the rival UGT, it lost its monopoly of trade union representation through the CGTP-IN, but the Communists' union was still the larger of the two associations and had control of almost all the major industrial workers' unions. The PCP kept losing ground in the Alentejo as the collective farms were dismantled, but it remained the most popular party in the electoral districts covering the area where agrarian reform had been implemented. The Portuguese Communists had to sustain successive defeats as they mounted resistance to democratic stabilization and to Portugal's accession to the EC. But, once the second constitutional revision was completed in 1989,[115] no comparably vital issues remained and, in this sense, the worst was over for the PCP. Having opposed every major step toward regime stability, it had always retreated at the last moment in order to avoid excessive isolation. In the end, this policy must be counted as a partial success, for the party continued to enjoy significant popular support. The PCP's resistance to democratic change had forced it into an internal crisis, but it had been able to bring the crisis under control because the renewal currents were incapable of establishing either an institutionalized minority platform within the party or autonomous organizations outside the party. In this matter also, the PCP fared better than other Western communist parties, at least for the time being.[116]

Its feat had been to give as little ideological ground as possible in the process of resisting change. The PCP's adaptations to the pluralist regime were always forced upon the party and brought about in the name of political realism, without compromising its orthodox identity. In this sense, resistance to change may explain both the party's decline and its limited nature, because this resistance retained and consolidated for the PCP a large core of members and voters.

Dealing with the problems of the international communist crisis was rather more complicated. The PCP would not discard its sectarian subordination to Moscow, even though the PCP found it increasingly difficult to identify with the latest policies of the CPSU. It chose not to change in this crucial area and decided to define the purpose of those policies as the consolidation of the communist regime in the Soviet Union. It would wait and see what the future held in store, meanwhile refraining from explicit comments, but not from indirect criticism.

The PCP no longer pretended that nothing was happening, and departed from its previous rule of suppressing any reservations it might have about policies of other communist parties. It was Cunhal himself who criticized the Polish and Hungarian communist parties for surrendering power to the opposition and who refused to condemn the Chinese Communist Party for its violent suppression of the pro-democracy movement in June 1989.[117] At about the same time, the PCP sided with the PCF against the PCI and the Spanish Communists over the issue of greater European integration, which led to a split in the Communist group in the European parliament.[118]

Finally, the issue of the General Secretary's succession remained. Immediately after the 12th Congress, Cunhal was flown to Moscow for surgery. This stunned his party and aggravated the succession issue. Although he recovered, the question of his succession remains urgent. Until the Congress, Octávio Pato had been the next in line, but he lost his membership in the Political Commission, retaining only a post in the party's Secretariat. Abrantes, apart from Cunhal the only mem-

[113]Official figures indicate a zero growth between 1983 and 1988, with a slight drop from 200,000 to 199,000 members, and demonstrate that the recruitment of 25,000 new members during that period was not enough to make up for attrition. The party admitted that 28 percent of its members had no "regular ties" to the PCP. Also, the percentage of party members under 30 years of age fell from 25.5 percent to 16.5 percent, and those over 50 years of age rose from 26.8 to 33 percent in 1983. See *Proposta de resolução política do XII Congresso do PCP*, pp. 74–75.

[114]See Richard F. Staar, "Checklist of Communist Parties in 1988," *Problems of Communism*, January-February 1989, p. 62.

[115]See *Avante!*, June 1, 1989.

[116]See Timmermann, op. cit.; Waller and Fennema, op. cit. See also Ronald Tiersky, "Declining Fortunes of the French Communist Party," *Problems of Communism*, September-October 1988; Kevin Devlin, "DKP Leadership Defeats Challenge but Loses Ground at West German CP Congress," RFE-RL, *Radio Free Europe Research*, Background Report No. 4, Jan. 11, 1989.

[117]*Avante!*, July 13, 1989.

[118]The PCP had tried to prevent the Spanish Communists from joining with the PCI, but failed. The Communist Party of Greece sided with the PCF and the PCP.

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ber of the Secretariat who retained his position in the Executive Political Commission, is but a loyal aide to Cunhal, who is perhaps trusted precisely because he has no outstanding political abilities.[119] Cunhal's hold over the party has never been so firm, but he is at once the problem and the only key to its possible solution.

It seemed, in fact, that the General Secretary had decided to establish the framework for the post-Cunhal regime. He altered the party program, putting aside his own "democratic and national revolution," demoted his heirs-apparent, realigned the party in its relations with other communist parties, and now prepared to change its alliance strategy. He paved the way for a Socialist-Communist coalition for the election of Lisbon's mayor.[120]

So far, Cunhal's strategy for this transition has been working with apparent ease. The PCP lost fewer votes than any other major party in the June 18, 1989, elections to the European parliament,[121] proving that Communist decline at the polls could be arrested. The coalition with the PSP demonstrated that the PCP was no longer excluded from alliances with major democratic parties, and also that the Communist Party itself had revised its former rejection of a socialist-communist bloc. The hopes of the renewal currents for an early second opportunity to resume their strategy for party change were destroyed because voters did not desert the PCP, and the PSP leadership did not seem to mind forming a coalition with an unrepentant, orthodox, and sectarian communist party. The renewal currents were rescued only by the acceleration of change in Eastern Europe after the fall of East Germany's communist leader, Erich Honecker. Following those events, the opposition leaders decided to form a united front consisting of the several renewal currents and to call for an extraordinary party congress.

The PCP had been wrong in its representation of pluralist democracy in Portugal as transient and precarious and in overestimating the totalitarian potential of Portuguese society—the two pillars on which the Communists' strategy rested since 1976. The slow and complex evolution of the post-revolutionary regime, as well as its recurrent instability, allowed the Communist Party to survive as a major party without having to choose between sectarian insignificance and pragmatic opportunism. In this negative sense, Cunhal had chosen an effective strategy.

What remains to be seen is whether the PCP can survive the inevitable succession crisis, as well as the decline of international communism and the weakening of revolutionary faith. Thus, the factors affecting the PCP's future lie outside its influence and may be beyond its control.

[119] *Expresso* (Lisbon), Mar. 11, 1989.

[120] The coalition was formed on July 23, 1989. The general secretary of the PS ran as candidate for mayor. See *O Diário*, July 24, 1989.

[121] With nearly 50 percent of the voters abstaining, the CDU coalition nevertheless received 597,000 votes, or 14.4 percent of the voters—a gain of 2.2 percent since the last general election.

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Notes

Reforming Agricultural Prices in Eastern Europe: The Case of Poland

Nancy J. Cochrane

MOST OF the centrally planned economies (CPE's) of Eastern Europe are engaged in attempts to overhaul their agricultural pricing systems. Throughout these countries' postwar histories, their economies have been characterized by government control over agricultural input prices, agricultural producer prices, and retail food prices. Perhaps the chief purpose of this control has been to ensure social stability by maintaining low and stable food prices for the population. Until the early 1980's, these governments managed to hold down prices paid to agricultural producers. However, in the early 1980's, most of these governments, in efforts to boost sagging production and reduce dependence on imports, allowed substantial increases in producer prices. These governments, however, were reluctant to raise retail prices and, instead, began to finance the rising producer prices with ever-increasing budgetary subsidies.

The increasing subsidies needed to maintain artificially low retail prices are creating problems for all the CPE's. For one, the subsidies are a huge drain on these countries' budgets. More important, in some countries, most notably Poland, they have created serious imbalances in the food supply, as artificially low prices generate excess demand and monumental waste—for example, farmers feed bread to their hogs because it is cheaper than grain. In order to bring their agricultural and food sectors into better balance, many of the countries of Eastern Europe began, even before the recent political upheaval, to introduce market reforms. These reforms included the removal of some price controls, the granting of greater autonomy to managers, and the introduction of measures that make it possible to close down unprofitable enterprises.

With its August 1, 1989, decree removing government controls from most retail food prices, Poland became the first East European country to take a truly radical step in the direction of price reform. This step was followed by the introduction in January 1990 of a wide-ranging package of economic measures, which removed virtually all government subsidies, placed strict controls on other types of government spending, and imposed tough wage controls on Polish workers.

The immediate effect of the August 1 decree was sixfold increases in some food prices; however, shortages were initially worse than ever. By October, the food supply had improved, but the annualized inflation rate was in the triple-digit range by the end of December and appeared to be out of control. Poland's experience with agricultural price reform clearly demonstrates that introducing market mechanisms into a centrally planned economy is more complicated than simply signing a decree. This note will look at some of the underlying causes of Poland's current problems, and then on a more general level make some observations about similar problems faced by other East European CPE's.

Background

Until the early 1980's, both producer and consumer

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Table 1: Prices Paid to Polish Producers, Selected Products, 1978–88

Złoty/ton

	1978	1980	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987	1988
				NOMINAL STATE PROCUREMENT PRICES				
Wheat	5,216	5,571	20,665	22,699	24,952	27,988	32,749	58,990
Rye	4,486	4,482	17,854	17,695	18,718	20,614	24,198	46,280
Barley	5,217	5,381	20,939	21,983	24,247	26,979	30,922	53,820
Oats	4,426	4,570	17,881	18,500	19,625	21,158	24,823	41,670
Sugarbeets	1,086	1,424	3,400	3,698	4,075	5,016	6,798	N.A.
Rapeseed	10,671	11,814	44,629	43,149	45,993	48,521	51,874	N.A.
Beef	30,135	33,286	100,265	115,703	133,652	150,054	176,287	342,000
Calves	35,245	36,464	118,017	124,805	141,734	196,307	264,550	502,000
Hogs	43,107	47,861	136,429	151,919	167,519	180,951	204,887	90,000
Sheep	44,495	59,662	195,454	218,401	248,111	254,276	272,494	N.A.
Poultry	33,593	35,670	134,947	137,690	150,796	174,333	203,814	N.A.
Milk	5,326	6,558	18,998	20,743	23,064	27,055	32,731	69,700
Eggs	46,802	53,505	175,234	169,036	188,096	212,350	267,061	449,000
				FREE MARKET PRICES				
Wheat	N.A.	8,970	27,810	28,410	28,690	32,160	37,440	N.A.
Rye	N.A.	7,320	22,690	21,350	21,060	24,400	29,250	N.A.
Barley	N.A.	7,930	24,870	24,770	24,970	28,450	33,740	N.A.
Oats	N.A.	7,700	23,830	23,320	22,800	25,810	30,930	N.A.
				CONSTANT 1980 STATE PROCUREMENT PRICES[1]				
Wheat	6,078	5,571	6,953	6,641	6,343	6,045	5,649	6,146
Rye	5,227	4,482	6,007	5,177	4,758	4,452	4,174	4,822
Barley	6,080	5,381	7,045	6,432	6,163	5,827	5,334	5,611
Oats	5,157	4,570	6,016	5,413	4,989	4,569	4,282	4,342
Sugarbeets	1,266	1,424	1,144	1,082	1,036	1,083	1,173	N.A.
Rapeseed	12,435	11,814	15,016	12,624	11,691	10,479	8,948	N.A.
Beef	35,116	33,286	33,736	33,852	33,974	32,408	30,410	35,635
Calves	41,070	36,464	39,708	36,515	36,028	42,397	45,636	52,306
Hogs	50,232	47,861	45,903	44,448	42,582	39,081	35,344	40,636
Sheep	51,849	59,662	65,763	63,899	63,068	54,917	47,006	N.A.
Poultry	39,146	35,670	45,405	40,285	38,332	37,651	35,159	N.A.
Milk	6,206	6,558	6,392	6,069	5,863	5,843	5,646	7,262
Eggs	4,538	53,505	58,960	49,456	47,813	45,862	46,069	46,784

[1]Deflated by Poland's consumer price index.

SOURCE: *Rocznik Statystyczny* (Statistical Yearbook), Warsaw, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, various issues.

prices for food products in Poland were controlled by the government, which imposed artificially low prices on producers. However, in the early 1980's, under pressure from Rural Solidarity to improve living conditions in the countryside, the government approved huge increases in producer prices. As a result, nominal producer prices nearly quadrupled between 1980 and 1983 and have risen every year since (see Table 1).

Retail food prices, which had remained virtually unchanged during the 1970's (leading to a steady decline in real food prices), were then increased sharply in 1981 and 1982, causing sharp rises in real food prices. Between 1982 and 1988, retail food prices once again fell sharply in real terms (see Table 2).

This system of high producer prices and low retail prices could only be maintained by paying huge subsidies. Total subsidies paid to agriculture and the food complex totaled 960 billion złoty. Of this total, 403 billion złoty were paid to food processors, while 557 billion went to farms, either as price supports or input subsidies. Total subsidies paid to agriculture and food pro-

[1]*Życie Gospodarcze* (Warsaw), No. 22, 1988.

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Table 2: Polish Retail Prices, Nominal and Real, 1975–88

Złoty/ton

	Flour	Beef	Pork	Poultry	Milk
			CURRENT PRICES		
1975	6,700	30,000	42,000	54,000	2,813
1978	6,700	30,000	42,000	54,000	2,813
1980	6,700	30,000	59,000	54,000	2,813
1981	23,000	30,000	59,000	54,000	2,813
1982	23,000	180,000	250,000	130,000	9,699
1983	23,000	180,000	250,000	130,000	9,699
1984	29,000	210,000	280,000	180,000	10,669
1985	41,000	240,000	320,000	206,000	10,669
1986	44,000	260,000	346,000	222,000	11,639
1987	50,000	286,000	380,000	244,000	13,579
1988	70,000	400,000	530,000	340,000	18,429
			CONSTANT 1980 PRICES[1]		
1975	7,946	35,577	49,808	64,039	3,336
1978	7,843	35,117	49,164	63,211	3,293
1980	6,700	30,000	59,000	54,000	2,813
1981	18,977	24,752	48,680	44,554	2,321
1982	9,280	72,623	100,866	52,450	3,913
1983	7,644	59,822	83,086	43,204	3,223
1984	8,395	60,794	81,059	52,109	3,089
1985	10,321	60,417	80,556	51,858	2,686
1986	9,427	55,703	74,128	47,562	2,494
1987	8,549	48,902	64,974	41,720	2,322
1988	7,294	41,678	55,224	35,426	1,920

[1]Deflated by Poland's consumer price index.

SOURCE: *Rocznik Statystyczny* (Statistical Yearbook), Warsaw, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, various issues; *Mały Rocznik Statystyczny* (Concise Statistical Yearbook), Warsaw, Główny Urząd Statystyczny. 1988.

cessing came to 19 percent of the total state budget expenditure and were equivalent to 28 percent of the value of food and alcohol consumption. Subsidies paid to agricultural producers came to 26 percent of the gross value of agricultural output and 37 percent of net output.[2] Such subsidies rose in real terms between 1983 and 1987 (see Table 3).

The huge subsidies paid out in Poland created gross inefficiencies, as food processors had no incentive to control costs. Subsidies also resulted in a general misallocation of resources, as food processors soaked up scarce resources that might have been used more effectively in other sectors.

But by themselves, subsidies did not lead to the food shortages that have been endemic to Poland for years. After all, food prices were subsidized throughout Eastern Europe, but lines in front of food shops were common only in Poland and Romania. Two underlying factors explain Poland's lines. First, the government has repeatedly yielded to demands for wage increases, which have far exceeded productivity gains (i.e., too many złoty have been chasing too few goods). Second, agricultural producers have not produced enough to meet the demand generated by the artificially low retail prices.

Several factors prevented Polish farmers from meeting this demand. Among these is the small, fragmented character of Poland's private farms, where potential productivity gains have been hindered by decades of government discrimination against private farmers.[3] In addition, international financial constraints prevented the import of crucial inputs. But the most serious problem has been a lack of price incentives for farmers to

[2]Ibid.

[3]For a more detailed discussion of the problems of Poland's private farmers, see Nancy J. Cochrane, "The Private Sector in East European Agriculture," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), March-April 1988, pp. 47–53.

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Table 3: Subsidies Paid to Agriculture and the Food Industry

Million Złoty/ton

	1983	1984	1985	1986	1987
			CURRENT PRICES		
Total input subsidies to agriculture	30,312	55,000	77,285	130,907	174,710
Feed	5,171	18,010	28,947	45,045	63,804
Fertilizers	23,290	33,363	45,407	79,880	100,380
Fuel	451	69	111	0	819
Seed	286	1,559	0	0	0
Plant protection	1,114	1,999	2,820	5,982	9,707
Total crop subsidies	25,141	36,990	48,338	85,862	110,906
Credit subsidies	N.A.	N.A.	23,921	24,426	22,619
Food subsidies	231,539	235,701	310,244	401,297	567,934
Meat	39,291	36,659	61,656	87,502	140,822
Dairy products	97,678	105,450	132,794	187,391	235,606
Cereal products	74,451	73,592	77,442	83,371	149,862
Sugar	8,119	6,545	7,686	453	0
Fish and fish products	7,064	6,066	7,888	9,808	10,184
Edible oils	4,936	7,389	15,400	23,431	30,564
			CONSTANT 1980 PRICES[1]		
Total input subsidies to agriculture	10,070	15,942	19,467	28,031	29,865
Feed	1,718	5,220	7,291	9,646	10,907
Fertilizers	7,738	9,670	11,438	17,105	17,159
Fuel	150	20	28	0	140
Seed	95	452	0	0	0
Plant protection	370	579	710	1,281	1,659
Total crop subsidies	8,352	10,722	12,176	18,386	18,958
Credit subsidies	0	0	6,025	5,230	3,866
Food subsidies	76,923	68,319	76,289	83,931	96,930
Meat	13,053	10,626	15,530	18,737	24,072
Dairy products	32,451	30,565	33,449	40,127	40,275
Cereal products	24,735	21,331	19,507	17,852	25,617
Sugar	2,697	1,897	1,936	97	0
Fish and fish products	2,347	1,758	1,987	2,100	1,741
Edible oils	1,640	2,142	3,879	5,017	5,225

[1]Deflated by Poland's consumer price index.

SOURCE: *Rocznik Statystyczny* (Statistical Yearbook), Warsaw, Główny Urząd Statystyczny, 1986 and 1988.

boost their output. Although large increases in nominal producer prices have been granted in recent years, prices of inputs have risen even faster, and farmers continued to find it difficult to realize a profit.

The ratio between farm income and the average income in the socialized economy as a whole, which jumped to 111 percent in 1982, declined to 99 percent in 1983, 93 percent in 1985, and 90 percent in 1986.[4] At the end of 1987, this ratio was only 85 percent.[5] This trend was temporarily reversed in 1988, when producer-price rises increased the ratio to 96 percent. However, by mid-1989, this ratio had fallen to 83 percent.[6]

Poland's farmers—for the most part small, private producers—have been squeezed between two monopolies. Until 1989, virtually all purchasing was done by state purchasing organizations, each of which had a

[4]L. V., "United Peasant Party Holds an Uneventful 10th Congress," Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty (hereafter—RFE-RL), *Radio Free Europe Research* (Munich), Poland Situation Report No. 5, Apr. 11, 1988, p. 5.
[5]*Sztandar Młodych* (Warsaw), Jan. 5, 1988.
[6]Reported by the US Agricultural Counsellor in Warsaw.

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monopoly over a given commodity. Compounding this problem, the production and supply of inputs were in the hands of another state monopoly. Faced with this situation, the farmers had no control over either input prices or output prices. Legally, they could sell their output privately, but because of the difficulty of getting the goods to the market (the result of inadequate transportation, combined with strong pressure to sell to the state), the volumes traded at free-market prices were small.

Price Liberalization Measures of 1989

Beginning in January 1989, several important measures took effect, aimed at the "marketization" of agriculture. Both producer and consumer food prices were allowed to rise with the immediate goal of relieving widespread consumer shortages. An equally important goal was the eventual elimination or at least drastic reduction of subsidies.

As of January 1, 1989, the monopoly status of the state purchasing organizations was abolished, and for more than a year, it has been legal for individuals or enterprises to purchase directly from farmers at whatever price they can negotiate.[7] An April 1989 decree abolished state control of producer prices; the state now set only guaranteed (i. e., minimum) prices, and in theory removed all restrictions on the prices that could be negotiated with the farmers.[8] The April decree raised the guaranteed prices an average of 34 percent over previous official prices, and on August 1, they were raised another 32 percent.[9]

The most important provision of the August 1 decree removed government controls from virtually all retail food prices. The government maintained price controls only for 2-percent milk, low-fat cottage cheese, infant formula, and plain bread. Otherwise, retail organizations were "free to set the prices of basic food products on the basis of the market situation" and could "seek to adjust those prices to demand."[10] At the same time, the government ended meat rationing.

Retail food subsidies were not removed at that time. Fearing that immediate removal would lead to excessive price rises, the government froze subsidies at their current level, but targeted a gradual, staggered reduction of subsidies over the following two months. As of October 1, 1989, subsidies remained only on 2 percent milk, low-fat cottage cheese, and "basic" bread. In addition to consumer subsidies for grain, dairy products, and meat, subsidies were also removed from feed for swine and cattle.[11]

Incomplete Marketization

In the weeks following the August price liberalization, it was clear that neither retail nor producer prices had reached their market-clearing level. Despite the sixfold increases in some food prices in the state shops, shortages were worse than ever. Furthermore, prices in private markets climbed to levels substantially higher than prices in the state stores for identical products, a strong indication that state stores were initially holding their prices below what the market would bear.

The price increases on the retail level did not, however, automatically translate into price increases for the producers, with the result that farmers began to withhold their output. Despite the de-monopolization of the purchasing organizations, few individuals or enterprises moved in to present serious competition to them, and they therefore continued to enjoy de facto monopolistic power over the farmers. Thus, prices actually paid to farmers continued to be close to the guaranteed level, even while prices of feed and industrial inputs were rising more rapidly than ever.

The costs of inputs rose particularly acutely for livestock producers. Feed costs had increased because the government had allowed grain prices to rise more rapidly than livestock prices. State enterprises producing industrial inputs to agriculture were faced with sharply higher wage bills, because of Solidarity's wage-indexation plan, and were being allowed to raise their prices to compensate for those costs. Hog producers were particularly hard hit. In response, they held their hogs back from the market. State-run slaughterhouses were consequently operating at well under half their capacity, leading to severe retail shortages.

But by October 1989, it appeared that the price adjustments needed to relieve these imbalances had begun. Prices in retail shops continued to rise, and shortages were much less pervasive than they were in August. Reports from the US Agricultural Counsellor in Warsaw suggested that by that time, the prices were having the desired effect of cooling demand. On the supply side, further increases in procurement prices began to have some positive effect on procurements. But both developments were slow to take place, and the prospects of reaching equilibrium in the near future were dim.

[7] *Rzeczpospolita* (Warsaw), No. 50, 1989, p. 1.
[8] *The Financial Times* (London), Apr. 18, 1989.
[9] This August 1 decree is detailed in *Życie Warszawy* (Warsaw), No. 17, 1989, p. 1.
[10] Ibid.
[11] Report from the US Agricultural Counsellor in Warsaw.

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Throughout the fall of 1989, retail food prices continued to rise rapidly, and wide disparities in prices developed among stores from one region in Poland to another. Several factors accounted for this instability.

Continued state control of the retail network. One explanation for the price instability lay in the fact that the retail sales network remained under state control. Initially, it appeared that state retail shops were under government pressure not to raise prices too rapidly. By October, however, that pressure had dissipated. In fact, at that time, prices in some state retail stores were higher than those in private markets.[12] This situation suggested that some state retail stores were beginning to take advantage of their monopoly position and were raising their prices accordingly.

The state retail monopoly was also attempting to make life difficult for private entrepreneurs seeking to establish competing retail shops. One group attempting to set up a private meat shop, for example, found that it could not obtain the necessary refrigerators because the state retailers maintained the exclusive right to import them.[13]

Subsidy-wage-price spiral. Another major factor behind instability in the retail markets was inflation. Before the government allowed prices to rise, the Polish economy suffered from significant suppressed inflation. The government simply printed money to finance the large subsidies paid to the food industry. Throughout the 1980's, the government repeatedly yielded to demands for huge wage increases, despite the lack of productivity gains. Combined, these policies resulted in a huge supply of złoty and a shortage of goods to buy. With the liberalization of prices, this suppressed inflation was released, and by the end of 1989, this subsidy-wage-price spiral had pushed inflation to an annualized rate of more than 500 percent.

Dealing with the wage side was politically very sensitive. Part of the Roundtable Agreement between the Polish United Workers' Party and Solidarity involved a wage-indexation plan, specifically designed to compensate workers for the price rises that would accompany the country's transition to a market economy. In August 1989, the government guaranteed 100 percent compensation to the workers for all food price rises for a period of two months (compensation for price rises in non-food items was set at 80 percent).[14] Legislation passed in October provided only 80 percent compensation for food price rises, but this modification failed to slow the wage-price spiral.[15] Wage-indexation ended in January 1990, when new legislation imposed strict controls on wage growth (see below). However, popular resistance to any curb on wages will be formidable.

Supply Side Problems

Several factors hindered the expected increases in production that were to result from the liberalization of prices. As noted, the state purchasing organizations have been slow to bid up the prices paid to producers to the point where farmers find it profitable to sell their output. This behavior may, in part, be the result of a lack of understanding of the way in which the market works. Moreover, the competition that was to have emerged under these circumstances has not materialized on any significant scale. And little has been done to date to address the underlying causes of the poor productivity of the agricultural sector.

Continuing dominance of the state purchasing monopoly. Some movement toward the break-up of the state purchasing monopoly into smaller competing organizations appears to have taken place, and the government reports an increase in competition among state purchasing organizations, as purchasers are now allowed to move outside their home territory and compete with organizations in other regions.[16] However, this diversification of purchasing organizations is not taking place with the aggressive competition one would expect in a market economy.[17] It is quite likely that the continuing power of the local *nomenklatura* is preventing a more rapid diversification (see below).

Lack of understanding of market principles. The continued monopoly of the state purchasing organizations does not, however, fully explain their failure to bid up prices to a level at which producers would be more willing to sell enough to allow these organizations to operate at full capacity. One explanation for this apparent anomalous behavior on the part of state purchasing organizations could be a lack of understanding of market principles. Under the old system, the state purchasing organizations could operate at less than full capacity and not suffer any consequences, because the government was always ready to bail them out with subsidies. Certainly, private farmers understand the

[12]Ibid.
[13]*The Economist* (London), Oct. 21–27, 1989, pp. 53–56.
[14]*Tygodnik Solidarność* (Warsaw), No. 12, 1989, p. 5.
[15]*Rzeczpospolita*, No. 231, 1989, p. 2.
[16]*The Washington Post*, Aug. 22, 1989.
[17]See *The New York Times*, Jan. 11, 1990; and *Rzeczpospolita*, No. 245, 1989, pp. 1–2.

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role of prices, but they have little power. State purchasing organizations, by contrast, have had no experience in setting prices and have never had to worry much about profitability.

Barriers to the entry of private firms. Private purchasing enterprises competing with the state for farm output are forming only on a limited basis. The biggest barrier is probably the lack of well-established capital markets to finance the heavy start-up costs. In 1989, Poland, following Hungary's example, introduced banking reforms, which legalized the establishment of commercial banks separate from the state bank. However, as yet, no private banking network has emerged in Poland, and would-be private entrepreneurs have nowhere to turn for funds.

The local *nomenklatura* appears to have erected certain barriers to the entry of competing firms—blocking access to trucks and refrigeration units, for example.[18] In general, the infrastructure (railroads, trucking firms, warehouses, refrigeration units, etc.) is under the control of a state monopoly and is not hospitable to competing private firms.

Inflationary expectations of producers. Poland's accelerating inflation has exacerbated the incentive problems created by lagging producer prices. As the Polish economy approaches hyperinflation, farmers prefer to hold on to their commodity stocks rather than turn them over for rapidly devaluing cash. As the currency loses its function as a store of value, farmers are increasingly unwilling to sell their goods, despite spoilage and inventory costs. For this reason, grain farmers, in particular, are continuing to hold back their output, despite significant rises in nominal procurement prices since August.[19] In turn, the reluctance of grain farmers to market their produce reinforces the pressures on livestock farmers—especially hog farmers—noted above. With recent increases in procurement prices and the high cost of feed, they have had no choice but to sell their hogs in greater numbers, but face poor incentives to rebuild inventories.

Continuing barriers to productivity. Little has been done to date to alleviate the serious obstacles to productivity gains, especially among private farmers. The fragmented farm structure is unchanged, making it difficult for farms to realize economies of scale. The government has not taken steps to eliminate the state input monopoly. Producers of inputs still have no incentive to control costs, hold down price increases, or provide an assortment of inputs suitable to the needs of the private farmers. International financial constraints also continue to prevent the import of sufficient quantities of chemicals and spare parts. Finally, Polish farmers must still contend with the crumbling infrastructure that has hindered productivity gains in the past.

The 1990 Economic Program

The solution to some of the problems described above is within the reach of the Polish government. The creation of an unfettered land market could do much to solve the problem of fragmented farms. The break-up of the input monopoly would help keep a lid on price increases and ensure a more suitable assortment of inputs. But the needed infrastructure improvements require capital. A certain amount of this capital could come from the Poles themselves. Numerous reports tell of large amounts of both złoty and dollars held by the population because of distrust of the state banking system.[20] Establishment of a solid private banking system could lure some of those funds into circulation. Some well-targeted Western capital could also help. But most of all, the government must assert control over wage growth and break the inflationary spiral.

The new package of economic measures, approved by the Sejm in December and slated to take effect in January 1990, addresses some of these problems. The major provisions of this legislation are the following:

- A balanced budget for 1990. This objective is to be accomplished through the elimination of most remaining subsidies, including most of the subsidies on coal, and the cancellation of a number of large investment projects.
- The achievement of złoty convertibility at a uniform exchange rate.
- Real progress toward privatization through the sale of shares to workers and more aggressive government action to break up the socialized meat, dairy, and coal-producing monopolies.
- An overhaul of the tax system, including the introduction of a value-added tax and a personal income tax.
- The implementation of wage ceilings, imposing penalizing taxes on enterprises that allow excessive wage increases. This policy does not denote a total

[18] *The Economist,* Oct. 21–27, 1989, pp. 53–56.
[19] *The Wall Street Journal* (New York), Oct. 25, 1989.
[20] Based on conversations between the author and economists from both Poland and the West.

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freeze on wages; rather, the goal is to keep the rate of wage increases at one-fifth the rate of inflation.

- Further moves to reform the banking system, including the establishment of a commercial banking system; the introduction of positive, real interest rates; and the floating of treasury bills. These changes will end the practice of financing budget deficits with essentially free credit from the national bank.
- The establishment of a social "safety net," including unemployment compensation, indexation of pensions to inflation, targeted food assistance (e.g., food stamps), etc.[21]

These measures immediately led to a five-fold increase in energy prices, a doubling of already high food prices, and significant price increases for other commodities, such that overall consumer prices are expected to double by the end of the first quarter.[22] The government projects a 25-percent drop in real personal incomes and a probable decline in national income during 1990.[23] However, the government also expects to be able to slash inflation from the current monthly rate of 50 percent to a monthly rate of just 5 percent by April 1990. The legislation is also supposed to accelerate the break-up of monopolies and lay the groundwork for the establishment of capital markets to encourage investment by private entrepreneurs. Most important, implementation of the program will mean the availability of the promised International Monetary Fund and World Bank aid, which is so desperately needed to repair Poland's infrastructure.

At least temporarily, however, these changes have exacerbated the supply-side difficulties. Farmers feel even more threatened with income losses than the general population: they have been hard hit by the sharp price rises for energy and other inputs and are facing slack demand on the part of consumers, because of high retail prices. However, the high food prices at the retail level are still not translating into increased income for farmers. Consequently, they are continuing to hold back output and are warning that they may have to cut back production.[24]

According to one report, some officials are hoping that such pressures will help drive inefficient farms out of business and encourage more efficient farmers to expand their holdings and realize some economies of scale.[25] However, farmers are reluctant to make that investment when input supplies and economic conditions in general are still so uncertain.[26] No evidence has yet appeared of any concrete plans to reform the input market.

Implications for East European Price Reform

Lessons can be drawn from the Polish experience, as the other countries of Eastern Europe seek to introduce agricultural price reforms. To date, only Yugoslavia and Hungary have attempted to liberalize prices to the extent Poland has. Yugoslavia is suffering many of the same problems as Poland, exacerbated by the increasing fragmentation of its economy and the weakness of the central government. By contrast, Hungary has had more success.

Hungary, of course, is not without its problems. With the highest per capita debt in Eastern Europe, Hungary operates under severe financial constraints. Producers complain of low prices and poor incentives; and the government has not yet eliminated all subsidies. However, in contrast to Poland, Hungary has pursued a longer, more sustained path toward reform—it has been phasing out subsidies and gradually lifting price controls over a period of several years. At the same time, the government has taken steps to establish private capital markets and has been more successful in controlling wage growth.[27] The result is that Hungary's inflation, estimated to be about 17 percent in 1989, while perhaps high by US standards, is modest compared to Yugoslavia and Poland.[28]

To date, the dramatic political changes of recent months elsewhere in Eastern Europe have not been accompanied by significant economic reforms. Under the old regimes, price reform in Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia consisted of increases in state-set producer prices (with the goal of spurring increases in output) and smaller rises in retail prices. Bulgarian authorities issued decrees liberalizing many prices, but in fact continued to exert control over most prices through the use of state orders.[29] Czechoslovakia was even more cautious in its approach to reform. The current governments of Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia, as well as that

[21] *Gazeta Wyborcza* (Warsaw), Oct. 19, 1989; *The Financial Times*, Dec. 18, 1989; *The Wall Street Journal*, Dec. 4, 1989.

[22] *The Financial Times*, Dec. 15 and Dec. 18, 1989.

[23] Ibid., Dec. 18, 1989.

[24] Ibid., Jan. 5, 1990.

[25] *The New York Times*, Jan. 11, 1989.

[26] Ibid.

[27] Analyst, US Central Intelligence Agency, "Hungary: Economic Performance in the 1980's," in *Pressure for Reform in the East European Economies*, selected papers presented to the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, 1989; *Figyelo* (Budapest), May 18, 1989, p. 15, translated in Joint Publications Research Service, *East Europe*, EER-89-079, July 13, 1989, pp. 47–49; *The Financial Times*, Apr. 4, 1989.

[28] Budapest MTI in English, in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: East Europe* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-EEU*), Nov. 21, 1989, pp. 55–56.

[29] (Footnote 29 is on p. 72.)

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of the German Democratic Republic, talk vaguely of the need for marketization and price reforms. However, it seems that precisely because of the Polish experience, they are quite wary of introducing rapid reforms. These governments believe that the changes need to be introduced gradually, in order to avoid the disruptions suffered by Poland.[30]

It is questionable, however, whether they will have the time to introduce these changes in a gradual manner. Pressures similar to those in Poland are building up in these countries.

Profitability problems also affect the socialized sector of East European agriculture. Managers of socialized farms find themselves caught between high input prices and low procurement prices.[31] Until recently, the response to low prices by socialized farms was muted. Farm managers had very little autonomy and made most planting decisions in accordance with plan targets. They had little reason to worry about profitability, because the state was always ready to bail them out. However, although recent management reforms introduced throughout the region have given farms more autonomy, the reforms have also imposed more stringent self-financing requirements on the farms.

The response to such changes has been most evident in Bulgaria. There, farmers, both private and socialized, are taking advantage of their newly granted independence from the central planners and are reacting to low procurement prices exactly the same way as the Polish farmers: they are cutting back deliveries to state purchasing organizations.[32] The result has been a fall in exports and serious disruptions in domestic food supplies.[33]

On the retail level, decades of artificially low food prices and high subsidies throughout the region have led to the same suppressed inflation that has now broken out into the open in Poland. Any sudden attempt to liberalize prices, especially if, as in Poland, it is only a partial liberalization, could lead to the same shortages accompanied by hyperinflation now occurring in Yugoslavia and Poland. This danger was explicitly recognized in a May 1989 report from Bulgaria, which describes an increasing shortage of consumer goods and warns of the dangers of the rise in forced savings created by a lack of goods on the market:

All these deformations [created by centralized planning] have led to the point where the consumers cannot use their income on the market, so they put it "in storage" in banks, mattresses, socks, and tin cans . . . . From a strictly economic point of view, the money deposited in various financial institutions is a "time bomb." This bomb exerts continuous pressure on the market by creating overt inflation.[34]

With increasingly open international borders, pressures are building for retail price reforms. Officials in Bulgaria, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, and the GDR are all concerned about the development of shortages resulting from an influx of foreigners who are buying up their cheap consumer goods and taking them abroad. Each of these countries has attempted to deal with the situation through more stringent customs controls, prohibiting the export of such goods unless they are bought with hard currency.[35] It seems inevitable, however, that, as long as borders remain open, such arbi-

[29]Bulgarian reforms implemented in 1987 replaced the use of state plan indicators with a system of "state orders" similar to those in the Soviet Union. In theory, enterprises can dispose of any production not included in state orders as they see fit, for prices that can be negotiated directly with the purchaser. These reforms are detailed in *Novo Vreme* (Sofia), No. 3, 1987, pp. 44–61.

[30]A Bulgarian report, for example, quotes an economist who advocates "turning to market prices in the course of several years" (Bulgarian Telegraph Agency, Sofia). The report also talks of the need for the "democratization of state property," but makes no mention of large-scale privatization. Czechoslovakia's new Prime Minister, Marian Calfa, in an interview with *The Financial Times* (Dec. 15, 1989), also stressed the need for a gradual transition to a market economy and expressed reluctance to "let the population pay the penalty for a failed economic policy."

[31]For further discussion of East European management reforms and the difficulties facing socialized farm managers, see Nancy Cochrane, *The New Economic Mechanism in Bulgaria*, ERS Staff Report No. AGES851121, US Department of Agriculture, Washington, DC, 1986; Nancy Cochrane and Miles Lampert, "East European Agriculture: Pressures for Reform in the Eighties," in *Pressure for Reform in the East European Economies*, selected papers presented to the Joint Economic Committee, Congress of the United States, 1989; and Nancy Cochrane, "Attempts to Integrate Market Forces into Socialist Agriculture: A Look at Bulgaria and Hungary and Implications for the USSR," in Karl E. Wädekin, Ed., *Communist Agriculture, Vol. 1: Farming in the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe*, London, Routledge, forthcoming in 1990.

[32]The reluctance of Bulgaria's private farmers to sell to the state was documented in Cochrane, "The Private Sector in East European Agriculture." Similar sentiments on the part of socialized farms were first documented in Rada Nikolaev, "Agricultural Procurement Prices, a Crucial Issue for the Economy," *Radio Free Europe Research*, RFE-RL, Bulgaria Situation Report No. 11, Nov. 20, 1987. More recently, reports in published in *Rabotnichesko Delo* (Sofia) on Nov. 29, 1988 and June 14, 1989, cited serious procurement shortfalls and criticized socialist producers who were "finding innumerable reasons for rejecting or restricting state orders."

[33]Spot shortages of certain food items, particularly fruits and vegetables, have been reported in several issues of *Rabotnichesko Delo*, beginning in 1987.

[34]*Obshchestvo i Pravo* (Sofia), May 1989, pp. 13–15.

[35]For example, an article in *Pravda* (Bratislava) on Dec. 21, 1989, warns of an "invasion of Austrian tourists" buying up Slovak meat. In addition, the Hungarian government recently instituted a ban on the export by tourists of food products, such as meat, vegetable oil, butter, cheese, and Christmas trees. Exceptions are made for goods bought in hard-currency shops and food carried abroad by Hungarian tourists for their own consumption. See Budapest MTI in English, in *FBIS-EEU*, Dec. 1, 1989, p. 85.

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trage will continue until domestic prices are allowed to adjust to world-market levels.

Conclusion

The prognosis is not entirely negative for lasting agricultural price reform in Eastern Europe. The experience of Hungary has shown that a slow and careful introduction of price reforms need not seriously disrupt the economy. And Poland may actually be able to get its inflation under control and start on the road to improvement. Czechoslovakia and the GDR, although they will eventually have to endure shocks similar to Poland's, may not suffer quite as much, because their economies generally are in better shape. However, the problems in Poland are graphic illustrations of the pitfalls of liberalizing prices overnight without prior steps to establish capital markets, impose discipline on and introduce competition into the socialized sector, and maintain control over wages.

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The "Abalkanization" of Soviet Economic Reform

Boris Rumer

A NEW catchword has recently appeared in the vocabulary of Moscow political pundits—"Abalkanization" (*abalkanizatsiya*) of the economic reforms. The term derives, with a wry allusion to "Balkanization," from the name of Academician Leonid Abalkin, director of the Soviet Union's leading center of scientific economics—the Institute of Economics—who in July 1989 was appointed chairman of the commission on economic reform and deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers. Nikolay Ryzhkov's team of deputies, until then made up of former defense-industry executives Yuriy Maslyukov, Lev Voronin, and Nikolay Talyzin, was thus joined by a professor of Marxist political economy with a reputation as an uncompromising proponent of radical reform of the economy. Economic reform had been spinning its wheels for four years, and Abalkin was brought in both to develop a new reform strategy and to oversee its implementation.

In the months following his appointment, Abalkin established himself in the public eye as the architect and principal executor of the Soviet government's economic policies. His simple and unpretentious manner, his attitude of studied reflection, the habit of staring into space over his eyeglasses while pondering answers to questions, his respect for the opinion of his interlocutor, and his measured quiet delivery that eschews the emotionalism that often marks Russian speech—all contribute to his image as a well-educated and cultured representative of the Russian intelligentsia, and have made him a media favorite. His name and ideas are so widely known as to have become virtually synonymous with the current economic aspects of *perestroyka*.

By the time Abalkin was appointed, the Soviet economy had reached a crisis stage in every sector. In early 1989, the economy was characterized by uncontrolled growth in prices, a rate of currency issuance that "staggers the imagination" (in 1988, twice as much money was printed as in 1987), and bare store shelves (out of 211 types of foodstuffs examined, only 23 were actually available for purchase at the beginning of 1989); in a majority of Soviet cities, items of daily necessity were rationed.[1] And economic conditions were getting progressively worse. According to *Izvestiya*'s economic correspondent, Mikhail Berger, the year 1989 witnessed a "collapse of the consumer market and ensuing consumer hysteria."[2] The incompetence of the government was becoming obvious to all. It fell to Abalkin to try to sort out the mess and prevent total collapse of the economy.

Abalkin the Pessimist

The main question troubling observers both inside and outside the USSR was: is it possible to reverse the process of growing chaos in the economy, given political constraints and the deterioration of public morale? Or is economic collapse—accompanied by unpredictable, yet certainly catastrophic political consequences—inevitable? Among Soviet economists and sociologists there is a growing sense of fatalism. For

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[1]Ye. Gaydar, "Economic Reform—The First Year," *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 2, January 1989; V. Selyunin, "Black Holes of the Economy," *Novyy Mir* (Moscow), No. 11, 1989; and *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya* (Moscow), Nov. 18, 1988.

[2]*Izvestiya* (Moscow), Dec. 30, 1989.

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example, Gavriil Popov, the leading economist of the opposition, stated in December 1989 that the number of economic problems had "reached a critical mass . . . and a chain reaction of disintegration has begun."[3]

The views expressed by Abalkin before his recent appointment, his assessment of the present situation, and his expectations for the foreseeable future are not significantly more optimistic than Popov's somber diagnosis. Already at the 19th Conference of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in June 1988, Abalkin indirectly accused the country's leadership of economic illiteracy when he quoted the 19th-century Russian economist Nikolay Turgenev:

Substantial knowledge of political economy is a duty of those who govern the state; one can say with assurance that any government that does not understand the principles of that discipline or neglects them will perish from [financial difficulties].[4]

Moreover, Abalkin has stated bluntly that the current economic situation does not stem from the difficulties inherited by Gorbachev from his predecessors, or Chernobyl', or the earthquake in Armenia, but from "a whole series of grave economic miscalculations made in 1986–1989," which have caused "disarray and imbalance in the economy and unjustified monetary expenditures." Key among these miscalculations were those which led to a rapidly expanding budget deficit. Basing his conclusions on research conducted in his institute, Abalkin argued that prior to 1985, Soviet state revenues had always exceeded expenditures, and hence responsibility for the recent sharp rise of expenditures over revenues should be directly laid to Gorbachev. At present, the rate of growth of expenditures is twice as high as that of national income. In order to overcome this rapidly growing imbalance, it will be necessary either to take excess cash away from enterprises and thus undermine their efforts and motivation to become economically self-reliant, or to speed up the printing of money.[5]

Abalkin's sharp, principled criticism of reform implementation and open opposition to Gorbachev's efforts to accumulate power at the 19th Party Conference have contributed to his popularity among the reform-minded intelligentsia and broader segments of the population.

Dimensions of the Task

Leonid Abalkin summed up the problem: "To leave the stagnation of the past means to become free from firmly implanted mass illusions. First is the illusion that everything is OK, that it's enough merely to tighten the screws [to correct the situation]. Let's be honest with each other: everything is not OK. First of all, we've forgotten how to work. But what's even worse is that we do not realize it. We have not realized what a national tragedy it is... The gap in education, in culture is like a gap in generations. Physical acceleration will not repair this gap. It will take millions of entirely different workers. . . . There is no class of masters, owners. There is no quality of the mass. I mean managers, economists, and financiers. Our journalists propose to make banks the nerve centers of the economy. But do we have even ten people in the country who really understand banking policy, for example? . . . It is necessary to train managers. . . . This will take more than one decade."[1]

***Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (Moscow), Feb. 8, 1989.**

Commenting on his nomination to the post of deputy premier, the government newspaper *Izvestiya* on June 29, 1989, observed: "His honest and therefore harsh assessment of the economic situation of the country is well known to many—from housewives to enterprise directors."

Abalkin is not a technocrat. He is a traditional representative of the Russian intelligentsia and considers the state of public morale one of the most important "factors of production." In assessing reform measures so far, Abalkin observed that *perestroyka* assumed the existence of certain "social forces. But we either do not have them, or they are in an embryonic stage. This predetermines the complexity and length of the processes that we have to live through" (see box above).[6] In another article, he spoke of the need to "climb out of the hole into which [the country slid] when millions were liberated from the responsibility of ownership and civic duty."[7] Abalkin's approach to reform is systematic and dialectical; he predicts that there will be "high and low tides," and perhaps even "dead ends."[8] This systematic approach differentiates him from the leadership he has now joined, which he once criticized for "giving pri-

[3]G. Popov's speech to the Second People's Congress, ibid., Dec. 15, 1989.

[4]*Devyatnadtsataya vsesoyuznaya konferentsiya KPSS: stenograficheskiy otchet* (19th CPSU Conference: Stenographic Report—hereafter, *19th Party Conference*), Moscow, Politizdat, 1988, p. 116.

[5]"Strategy of Renewal," *Ogonek* (Moscow), No. 13, 1989, p. 19.

[6]*Komsomol'skaya Pravda* (Moscow), Feb. 8, 1989.

[7]"Economic Reform—the Decisive Step," *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta* (Moscow), No. 27, 1989.

[8]*Komsomol'skaya Pravda*, Feb. 8, 1989.

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ority to current tactical decisions to the detriment of strategic [decisions]."[9]

How does one account for the fact that such an avowed pessimist and critic of the leadership obtained a key government position? The following reasons suggest themselves.

First, Gorbachev needed to make an appointment that would offset the conservative cast of his economic decision-making team and give some encouragement to liberals seeking more extensive reforms. The premiership remains in the hands of Ryzhkov, who in the course of four years has demonstrated his mediocrity and an inability to prevent financial disarray. Gorbachev also inexplicably tried to retain his discredited and conservative Finance Minister Boris Gostev and the chief of the foreign trade administration, Vladimir Kamentsev, but they were rejected by the Supreme Soviet in June 1989. Appointment of the former chairman of the Price Committee, Valentin Pavlov, to Gostev's post, and of Gostev's former deputy, Vyacheslav Senchagov, to head the Price Committee was little improvement. Without some dramatic appointment, retention of this reshuffled old deck would have signaled fundamental opposition to more extensive economic reform on the part of Gorbachev.

Second, and more important, the 19th Party Conference had unequivocally rejected the program of accelerated growth adopted by the 27th CPSU Congress in 1986. In the words of the deputy director of the Economic Research Institute of Gosplan, Gennadiy Zoteyev, the "myths propagated by [Abel] Aganbegyan indicating that scientific-technological progress reinforced by the human factor would allow us to accelerate the rate of economic growth have been dispelled."[10] The ground was slipping out from under the feet of a confused and uncertain leadership. The pursuit of the course insisted upon by the radicals—an immediate transition to a free market and deregulation of prices—was viewed by the leadership as absolutely unacceptable.[11] Yet to reject further reform would be tantamount to an admission that *perestroyka* had failed. A compromise of some sort had to be found: the Soviet leadership had to sustain the image of ongoing reform without going beyond its own self-imposed limits.

For such a maneuver to succeed, they had to find a figure who, by virtue of his authority, could lend dignity to this half-way reform process and create a conceptual basis for it. Abalkin, it seems, fit their bill. Both Gorbachev and Ryzhkov were acquainted with his ideas, which he had expressed more than once at meetings of the top leadership, and they apparently perceived him to be somewhat less radical than his public reputation suggested. They accepted his conception of what needed to be done, and he responded to the call with a certain sense of mission.[12]

Abalkin's Blueprint

Abalkin sees reform as progressing through two stages. The first, to last until 1995, is to be one of economic stabilization, a substantial period of transition during which "the conditions for the introduction and effective functioning of the new economic mechanism will have to be created." The second stage, to consist of "step-by-step implementation of economic reform," is to begin "only after the stabilization is completed, and will last from 1995 to 2000."[13]

Abalkin's period of stabilization represents a dialectical "low tide," a virtual retreat from reform as advocated by more radical economists. Given the present situation, he does not see any possibility for solving such crucial problems as making the transition to wholesale trade in producer goods and reforming prices unless the present planning system, budget policy, and pattern of foreign trade are fundamentally changed and the monopoly of producers is abolished. Moreover, he considers a prior condition for all such measures to be the centrally contrived establishment of some sort of equilibrium between supply and demand.

The situation is, according to Abalkin, so critical that it is necessary to take "extraordinary measures."[14] In defining these "extraordinary measures," he manifested a less than radical stance. Already at the turn of 1988–89, Abalkin told a meeting of the USSR Council of Ministers:

With the present imbalance of revenues and expenditures, the situation dictates return to the command

[9]"Strategy of Renewal," loc. cit., p. 18. He described the economic decision-makers as running around like "chickens with their heads cut off." The Russian expression is "*ugorelyye koshki*," meaning literally a cat maddened by poisonous fumes.

[10]G. Zoteyev, "*Perestroyka* as a Strategy for a Transitional Period: A Glimpse from Within," a paper presented at the annual conference of the American Economic Association, Atlanta, GA, December 1989.

[11]Gorbachev suggested that the government would not last even two weeks under such conditions. Cited by Thane Gustafson's his Jan. 24, 1990, commentary, "Is Soviet Economic Reform Dead?" SOVSET, computer network of the Center for Strategic and International Studies, Washington, DC.

[12]As he said in an interview shortly after his appointment as deputy premier, "There are many who want to criticize and remain in the opposition. It looks good and is easy. I myself can confirm it. [All it takes] is to keep up with the journalists' questions and grant interviews. But somebody must work. Somebody must save the country. There is still a chance to pull it out of the crisis." *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 27, 1989, p. 2.

[13]"The Government Consults with the World of Scholarship," *Pravitel'stvennyy Vestnik* (Moscow), No. 3, 1989, p. 3.

[14]Strategy of Renewal," loc. cit, p. 19.

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system. This option cannot be excluded, because management levers which were given up earlier must be taken back. The recovery of the economy will take two to three years. It will be necessary to stop pumping up the economy with money during that period.[15]

Over the last year or so, Abalkin has spelled out a variety of measures he sees as essential for restoring the health of the economy:[16]

- Immediately reduce state budget expenditures. Adjust the budget and the plan for 1989 despite the fact that the year was already under way. Cut back investment in large construction projects and halt work on the construction of several enterprises. Cut military expenditures and the space program.
- Continue expenditures on the "large-scale research programs" required if the state is "to remain a superpower and support its claim to world leadership, including in the area of scientific and technological progress," and not fall into a position of economic and political "dependence."
- Reform the credit system by raising interest rates and cease using credit to cover the budget deficit.
- Hold back on general price reform, but set aside a portion—perhaps 10 percent—of the output of such goods as cement, glass, steel, timber, agricultural equipment, and auction it off on the consumer market. According to Abalkin, in two to three years, such sales might roughly balance supply and demand.
- Impose limitations on the use of funds by enterprises. "Freeze" temporarily a share of their profits. More specifically, ban the investment of 20 percent of their capital development funds for two years.
- Examine the possibilities for freezing some portion of the savings of the general public.
- Stop or cut back significantly subsidies to unprofitable enterprises (which cost 20 billion rubles per year) and either lease these enterprises to cooperatives or close them.
- Cut back on some social programs. Abalkin does not specify which programs, but he notes that "one should not try to build popularity among the people and give them money that is not worth anything and is not backed by goods. It would be better not to issue this money, though the forced nature of such measures would necessarily have to be explained to the public."
- Use foreign imports to alleviate the shortage of consumer goods—not by engaging in additional borrowing, but by changing the structure of imports. Reduce grain purchases and use the freed-up currency to import goods that are in high demand and that can sell at high prices in the domestic market.

Abalkin's gradual, step-by-step economic reform would extend over one decade at minimum. And what is the ultimate goal? The answer is ambiguous. Although few in the Soviet Union would deny the need to disassemble the centralized command economy, few advocate a pure market. Both Gorbachev and Ryzhkov are encouraging scholars and analysts to construct a model that incorporates desirable elements of the planned economy as well as of the market. Abalkin seems to leave open this option:

[W]hen we speak of the market, I am for the market, for its uninhibited utmost development. But not in the guise of some kind of autonomous system or as a panacea for all the woes life poses. It should be only one component of a complex and much broader system.[17]

Abalkin declines to give any clear indication of what he sees as the optimal proportion between market and plan. However, when his separate pronouncements are examined in concert, it becomes clear that the plan is to retain its dominant role. Abalkin considers the plan to be "the controlling instrument regulating economic and social processes."[18] Although he proposes that the "control figures" (*kontrol'nyye tsifry*) lose their mandatory character, they should, nonetheless, continue to serve as approximate guidelines. In Abalkin's model, the system of obligatory enterprise fulfillment of some range of state orders (*gosudarstvennyye zakazy*) would be retained. The most important regulating function in Abalkin's economy is to be played by long-term economic normatives. In essence, during the period in which the extraordinary measures are operative, virtually no movement toward a market economy would take place. Only after this stage was completed could the progressive transition begin toward an economic sys-

[15]"The Government Consults . . . ," loc. cit. It is unclear from Abalkin's statements in the article whether the two-to-three-year period of "recovery" is to precede or take place concurrently with the five-to-seven-year "transition" period. Depending on this question of interpretation, Abalkin either sees the first real reforms only in the years after 1995 or envisions some gradual reform "mechanisms" being put into place as early as 1993.

[16]Culled from ibid.; "Meeting at the Editorial Board" *Voprosy Ekonomiki* (Moscow), No. 6, 1989, pp. 22–23; "Economic Reform—the Decisive Step," loc. cit., p. 2; "Strategy of Renewal," loc. cit., pp. 19, 20; *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, June 24, 1989; and *Izvestiya*, June 29, 1989.

[17]"Strategy of Renewal," loc. cit., p. 7. In this context, Abalkin turns to the authority of John Kenneth Galbraith. Citing that author's *The Post-Industrial Society*, Abalkin states that "the market is only one of the sectors of a contemporary Western economy."

[18]Ibid.

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tem that would combine optimally both the market and the plan.

Abalkin remains a dedicated supporter and propagandist of socialism. In November 1989, he declared that "the mission of the reform is to prove the viability of the socialist system . . . its humanitarian nature." He affirmed the principles of the October Revolution and asserted that "the socialist choice . . . was the choice of the people [*narod*]." With regard to the most fundamental question of reform—that of ownership—he takes an orthodox communist stance: "We will accept only those forms of ownership that do not allow the exploitation of man by man, the division of people into 'haves' and 'have-nots'. . . ." Such statements are accompanied by foggy discussion of a "socialist market," and a "new conception of centralism, a new philosophy of centralized government regulation of the economy."[19]

Thus, his image from early 1989 as a doubting, reflective intellectual has dissolved. Abalkin—a member of the Ryzhkov team—has become an active proponent of the official ideology in its present-day variant. We can only speculate as to whether this evolution represents opportunism or merely self-discipline dictated by his new role. Whatever the case, it is unlikely that serious conflicts over the pace and methods of economic reform will emerge between the Prime Minister and his Deputy.

Abalkin and the Reform Debate

Abalkin's central thesis—that a temporary retreat from reform has been forced on the Soviet economy by circumstances—has clearly gained support among those at the highest levels of power, including government ministers and their staff, as well as the scientific-industrial establishment. For example, Academician Vladimir Semenikhin (a well-known specialist in automation and telecommunications, and himself the executive of a high-tech production firm) stated: "As far as the scholar's [Abalkin's] recommendations calling for a return to the command system of management are concerned, if we understand this recommendation as a recognition of the need to restore the planning basis in industrial management that has been weakened over the past few years, then one is of course obliged to agree on this point."[20]

Although Semenikhin states that free-market relations among enterprises are "in principle, the right road to follow, and in the future we will move in that direction," he cautions:

One simply can not overlook the existing real conditions. . . . It is clear that given limited resources and the monopolistic position of many producers . . . the abandonment of completely centralized, comprehensive planning of complex production will not only lead to a disruption in the tempo of work in the most essential enterprises, . . . but also threatens to cause a loss of managerial control over industry at a decisive stage of perestroyka.[21]

By contrast, those who wish to radicalize the reform process see Abalkin's strategy as being, not a temporary retreat, but rather a definitive rejection and curtailment of the reform. Vasiliy Selyunin, for example, criticized the report prepared at the Institute of Economics under Abalkin's direction and presented by Abalkin to the Council of Ministers at the turn of 1988–89 for:

putting off reform until more favorable market conditions have been created in the economy, when the most glaring disequilibria will have been eliminated. But re-balancing the economy before reforming it, or instead of reforming it, is hopeless. When the monetary system and budget are ill, this indicates the economy itself is ill and must be cared for, and cured. Other than reform, there is no cure for it.[22]

Selyunin wrote in early 1989 that "the first thing that must be done is to repeal, to reject fundamentally, directive planning," and revealed that he "had an argument with Abalkin on this topic."[23] According to Selyunin, "The question today must be posed as follows: either economic reforms, or directive planning, the latter being in fact the frontal armor of the command-administrative system."[24]

Selyunin attacks Abalkin's implementation program as well:

It is as though we ourselves did not believe in the ideas of perestroyka*; once again we are trying to drive, trying to spur the discarded command-economy system forward . . . . This is an attempt to*

[19]"Radical Economic Reform—Decisive Acceleration," *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta*, No. 47, 1989, p. 3.

[20]*Pravda* (Moscow), Apr. 10, 1989.

[21]Ibid.

[22]*Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, Apr. 6, 1989. In a speech at the Moscow Architects' Union Hall in February 1989, Selyunin declared that Abalkin is suggesting "dragging out the deep reforms until the end of the century." See *Russkaya Mysl'* (Paris), Mar. 17, 1989, p. 5.

[23]Interview in *Pamir* (Dushanbe), No. 2, 1989, p. 102.

[24]*Russkaya Mysl'*, Mar. 17, 1989, p. 5.

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"rape" the administrative-command planning system one last time—"one more time you've got to let us use you to save us all, you damned wench"—and afterward we will carry out the reform . . . .[25]

Price Reform: A Pivotal Issue

The sharpest disagreement between the radical reformers and those who favor the measured approach focuses on the issue of price reform. Viktor Kuznetsov of the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations of the USSR Academy of Sciences has highlighted the attempt by "the majority of theoreticians and practitioners of the reform programs" to avoid the "malediction" of price reform. "They are," he stated, "willing to sacrifice the core, the very essence of the entire radical reform of our national economy: the development of the market, the creation of a system of direct ties."[26]

During the nearly five years of the Gorbachev era, the attitude toward raising prices on consumer goods—particularly on foodstuffs—has changed markedly. Initially, most specialists argued that such a measure was both necessary and unavoidable; only the means and methods for compensating the poorest sectors of the population in the face of these price increases were brought up for discussion. Such leading economists as Abel Aganbegyan, Tat'yana Zaslavskaya, Stanislav Shatalin, and others called in unison for a rise in prices, to be accompanied by a curtailment of subsidies paid to the agricultural sector.[27] All of them acknowledged that without a radical reform of the price-setting mechanism, it was senseless to talk about economic reform. Later, however, as Viktor Kuznetsov put it, "the erstwhile supporters of price increases began pulling up stakes and heading to the camp of the 'stabilists' [those seeking to maintain price stability]."[28]

Selyunin belongs to a minority that insists on immediately letting prices on consumer goods—including the foodstuffs in the daily necessity group—rise to market-clearing levels. He is in favor of looking the facts in the face, and against deceiving the public.[29] In July 1989, he wrote:

What is needed now are tough measures, unpopular ones . . . . What do I have in mind? It is going to be necessary to go ahead with a rapid rise in retail prices. Either prices are going to rise—and goods reappear on the shelves of the shops—or we are destined to have ever more rationing cards. The equipment to print them is already in place, and the ration cards and coupons are raining down upon us. I cannot imagine anything worse for perestroyka.[30]

The "Prices" of Reform

Some Soviet reformers adhere to the "scientific price-setting" school. Thus Abel Aganbegyan argues: "The trick is all in calculating just such a price for milk that . . ." or "Say we were to begin with the given of the country's consumer demand for milk and we were to add up . . . ."[1] Others, such as L. Evenko of the Institute of the USA and Canada, highlight the absurdity and futility of this latest attempt at perfecting the price-setting mechanism using the old methods of the command economy and condemn it as a search for a "a technocratic utopia."[2]

Aleksandr Levikov, an economic commentator for *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* concluded: "[T]he price reform is doomed as long as there is no market present, and a market is impossible in the present chaos of prices. . . . A vicious circle. The only thing one can do is sit and wait it out; perhaps someone will eventually shout 'Eureka!' and all will become clear. There are no miracles. I think that the market itself will sift out the incongruities and irregularities and that it will show us where and what to regulate. But we have to determine finally: do we want this market, or don't we?"[3]

[1]*Ogonek* (Moscow), No. 29, 1987, p. 3.
[2]*Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Moscow), Dec. 14, 1989, p. 10.
[3]Ibid.

Every indication is, however, that the "stabilists" have won. Why? Because the articles, statements, and speeches of the economic analysts and, most important, the transparent hints dropped by Gorbachev himself about the need for consumer price increases, caused a wave of protest among the population, at least a quarter of which already lives below the poverty level as defined by Soviet officialdom. Yuriy Izyumov, deputy editor-in-chief of the *Literaturnaya Gazeta,* put it this way:

Democracy of prices [i.e., the setting of subsidized prices that were to make products available to the largest number of citizens regardless of income lev-

[25]*Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya,* Apr. 6, 1989.
[26]"Western Experience and Our Economic Reforms," *Mirovaya Ekonomika i Mezhdunarodnyye Otnosheniya* (Moscow—hereafter cited as *MEiMO*), No. 7, 1989, p. 5, and No. 3, 1989, p. 17.
[27]See, for example, the article "Man and the Economy," *Ogonek,* Nos. 29 and 30, 1987.
[28]"Western Experience and Our Economic Reforms," *MEiMO,* No. 7, 1989, p. 5.
[29]See *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya,* Apr. 6, 1989; and interview in *Pamir,* No. 2, 1989, p. 102.
[30]*Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya,* July 1, 1989.

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els] has always been one of the superior features [of our system]. Today, that democracy of prices is maintained only in a few sectors, one of which is foodstuffs. And now we see that through the combined forces of the [economic] analysts, price administrators, and planners, an attack is being mounted on the last [remaining] groups of democratic prices. Suffice it to recall what happened to Khrushchev when he raised prices on meat and dairy products.

Izyumov continued:

Following price hikes, how much is a breakfast at the school cafeteria likely to cost? —or a lunch in a workers' dining hall? Toward what sector of the population have the supporters of price increases oriented their thinking? Could it be they are aiming at cooperative workers and owners, with their multi-thousand ruble income? Yet, based on the latest data, tens of millions of people in this country have an average monthly per-person income of only 75 rubles. How would they survive?[31]

Perceiving their political backing to be anything but solid, Gorbachev, Ryzhkov, and company must have been frightened by this reaction. Clearly, Gorbachev's own attitude toward price reform has undergone a sea change. As late as June 1988, at the 19th Party Conference, the General Secretary asserted:

Much now turns on the reform of the price-formation mechanism. I am referring to the review of wholesale prices, of state procurement prices, and of retail prices. The fact that this issue remains to be settled greatly complicates the realization of the economic reform. Without the reform of prices, we cannot create normal economic relations in the national economy, ensure a valid evaluation of expenditures and output, equivalency in the exchange of goods and services. Without this we cannot stimulate scientific-technical progress and the wise and efficient use of resources, or normalize the market conditions.

Turning to the significant state subsidization of retail food prices, Gorbachev concluded,

Such a situation is abnormal. . . . Therefore, it is simply imperative that this problem be solved, however difficult it may prove, whatever doubts and concerns the issue may elicit at first glance.[32]

Even at this early date, Gorbachev was, however, careful to add that "the change in retail prices must not under any circumstances lead to a lowering of the standard of living of people," and promised that the population would receive compensatory payments.[33] On the one hand, this statement signified a lack of seriousness about structural economic reform as such; after all, compensating the workers for price rises would do nothing to redress the fundamental problems faced by the economy. On the other hand, this promise failed to reassure the public: polls showed that "the mass consumer does not believe that he will receive full compensation to offset the rise in prices."[34]

In the ensuing months, the Soviet economy in general, and the consumer sector in particular, was hit by what economists and sociologist have called an "avalanche" (*obval*). As the availability of goods and services declined and inflation took hold, the press was hit by a tidal wave of angry letters from the public accusing the leadership of hypocrisy and of disregard for the vital interests of the people. Under such conditions it would have been political suicide for Gorbachev to have raised prices. By March 1989, the General Secretary was speaking in entirely different terms:

In anything connected with retail prices, comrades, there must be a great deal of responsibility in our approach. . . . At a certain stage, following debate in the society, we all came to the conclusion that for the present, prices should not be meddled with. . . . People would not understand such a step. . . . We have not yet satisfied the market in goods or foodstuffs. We have not yet taken those cardinal measures for establishing order in the financial situation of the nation. . . . Two or three years of work are required to restore to health the economy, the financial situation, and the market in general. Only then will we be able to raise the question of prices.[35]

Other members of the Gorbachev leadership followed the General Secretary's cue. In June 1989, Premier Ryzhkov told the Congress of People's Deputies that "in the coming two or three years, it is not necessary to review retail prices. First and foremost, the consumer market must to some degree be put back on an even keel and then only can this question [of prices] be addressed. But it would seem that we will only go on to that

[31] "Reform Should Not Be Pro Forma," *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (Moscow), Nov. 9, 1988, p. 10.

[32] *19th Party Conference*, pp. 32–33. The Soviet government currently pays collective farms five rubles for a kilo of meat while selling this meat to the population at two rubles a kilo. See "Reform Should Not Be Pro Forma," loc. cit.

[33] *19th Party Conference*, pp. 32–33.

[34] "Reform Should Not Be Pro Forma," loc. cit.

[35] *Pravda*, Mar. 18, 1989.

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matter in the setting of the next five-year plan."[36]

Having given up on the idea of allowing prices on food products to rise to market-clearing levels, the Soviet government apparently does intend to raise prices on a variety of production inputs. A significant hike in coal prices was already announced following the miners' strikes in the summer of 1989, and on January 1, 1990, transportation rates and wholesale prices of electric power and diesel fuel were unexpectedly raised. There is talk of January 1991 price hikes for other raw materials, building materials, and steel.[37] Accordingly, subsidies paid to kolkhoz farms and sovkhoz farms for production of agricultural goods can be expected to grow. Hence, what is taking place is exactly the opposite of what the strategists of the reform had intended and what Gorbachev had projected.

Practical Measures

At the beginning of 1989, Abalkin proposed a formula for stabilization of the economy: "reduction of the budget deficit, normalization of the money supply, stabilization of the consumer market." By September, he had refined these proposals to "restraint of economic growth, financial reorganization, and the strengthening of social priorities in the development of the economy."[38] It was this triad, along with Abalkin's strategy of a two-stage transition period, that lay at the heart of the government's economic program that the Congress of People's Deputies overwhelmingly approved in December 1989.

A number of innovations in this plan attest to the influence of Abalkin. There was an explicit commitment—Gramm-Rudman style—to reduce the 120-billion-ruble deficit to 60 billion rubles in 1990. In September 1989, Abalkin stated that the planned rate of growth of national income for 1990 was to be drastically reduced, to 1.1 percent. The structure of distribution of national income is to be shifted in favor of consumption and nonproductive construction at the expense of investment in heavy industry. The growth in production of consumer goods is designed to be higher than the growth in the output of heavy industry.[39]

Abalkin sees himself as performing the thankless task of trying to steer the sinking Soviet economy past the "perils of left and right extremism."[40] One of his most unpopular moves, which he claims to have taken for the sake of lowering consumer demand, was to discourage growth in worker income by introducing a tax on the expansion of wage funds in heavy industry. This action was met with stormy indignation by a large segment of the population. To a considerable extent, the furor was fueled by populist-conservatives, especially at the top levels of the official labor unions (*profsoyuzy*), who desperately need to change their image and win trust among the working masses. The leaders of the Moscow labor unions organized a protest rally, at which they accused Abalkin (rather than Gorbachev or Ryzhkov) of ignoring the interests of workers.[41]

The radical economists voice more objective and serious criticism of Ryzhkov's program, and hence of its architect, Abalkin. They assert that Abalkin's plan to reduce incomes by imposing a tax on growth of wage funds cannot possibly yield the desired result, and they contend that the program does not allot sufficient resources and production capacity to sustain the projected surge in the production of consumer goods.[42]

In hoping to reduce the budget deficit—and thereby achieve a decline in the rate of inflation—by stringent administrative measures, Abalkin fails to take current political reality into account: all the existing factors causing growth in the rate of inflation have been joined by a new one: overt political lobbying. The two sessions of the Congress of People's Deputies witnessed a flood of demands addressed to the government to raise outlays for pensions, wages, public health services, education, ecological programs, housing and roads, crime prevention, etc. During the course of a single week of the first session of the Congress, demands of this nature piled up to the tune of 500–600 billion rubles—

[36] *Izvestiya*, June 10, 1989.

[37] *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, Dec. 14, 1989; and *Rabochaya Tribuna* (Moscow), Jan. 28, 1990.

[38] "The Government Consults with the World of Scholarship," loc. cit., p. 3; and *Izvestiya*, Sept. 22, 1989.

[39] *Izvestiya*, Sept. 22, 1989. Apparently the national income target for 1990 is in dispute. In an article published in November 1989, Yevgeniy Ivanov, chief of a State Planning Commission department dealing with macroeconomic planning indicated a target growth of approximately 4 percent for 1990 (see *Planovoye Khozyayzstvo* [Moscow], No. 11, 1989, p. 8).

[40] *Izvestiya*, Sept. 22, 1989.

[41] "Sometimes the Medicine Is Bitter," *Argumenty i Fakty* (Moscow), No. 41, 1989, p. 3; and "Time and Money," *Moskovskiye Novosti* (Moscow), Oct. 15, 1989.

[42] According to Selyunin, the population's savings amount to 500 billion rubles. The growth of incomes during 1990 is planned at 50 billion, which Abalkin's tax may reduce by a maximum of 3 billion. In other words, without such a tax incomes would amount not to 50 billion, but to 53 billion. See *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya*, Dec. 31, 1989. Thus, the introduction of a tax would not, practically speaking, lessen the pressure exerted by the money supply on the market. At the same time, such an action destroys even the timid beginnings of economic independence on the part of enterprises, and sends reform back to the drawing board. If one adds to this the violently negative reaction of the public, then this measure must be admitted to be not only devoid of any practical meaning, but also a factor in the discrediting of Abalkin in the eyes of the public.

See also G. Fil'shin, "Planned Traps," *Moskovskiye Novosti*, Jan. 7, 1990.

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practically the size of the entire government budget.[43] And to this one should add the pressures exerted by elected representatives demanding greater investment in their constituent regions. The miners' strikes and the leadership's capitulation to the miners' economic demands opened yet another channel through which pressure can be exerted on the government.

We can only expect that in 1990, the printing presses will markedly increase their production of rubles. The government has rejected the proposal by Gennadiy Fil'shin, an economist and ranking member of the Supreme Soviet, that the State Bank be freed from subordination to the government and be given independent power to control the issuance of currency.[44] The regime is understandable reluctant to relinquish control of the money spigot.

Conclusion

Both Abalkin and his radical opponents call on Gorbachev to take a decisive policy line and to act with determination and without delay. The line adopted by Abalkin and like-minded "neo-conservatives" is to sound the retreat, regroup forces, and then move forward by degrees in search of some kind of optimum mix of plan and market. Selyunin and other radical economists, by contrast, assert that one must charge forward unflinchingly to effect an immediate transition to a market economy, to prices determined by the market, and to a reduction of the plan's role to a minimum. The market itself, it is said, will recalibrate everything. But in the interim, the use of such "shock measures" as price hikes is inevitable, and with them, the rise of public discontent and all of the consequences this carries for the political leadership.

Leonid Abalkin deserves respect; he has shouldered an unbearable load. The attempt to reform the Soviet economic system in stages, employing command methods, is a Sisyphean, ultimately futile, task. As Gennadiy Zoteyev observes, Abalkin's argument "has a seeming logic to it, with which one could agree if it were not for past experience in reforming the Soviet system. But [this] experience teaches us that the reestablishment of the old system begins with 'concern for the people' and the usual promise of new reform in the future, once the proper conditions have developed."[45]

The alternatives are clear: Gorbachev has opted for the policy line advocated by Abalkin. In defending this approach, Abalkin has declared: "Appeals to carry out reform in a single stroke, to cross the chasm in a 'single leap,' are, in my view, simply unrealistic. They fail to take into account either the dimensions of the chasm, or the strength of the person preparing to jump."[46] But the two-step approach to chasm-leaping is fatal.

[43]B. Pinsker, L. Piyasheva, "Property and Freedom," *Novyy Mir*, No. 11, 1989, p. 196.
[44]Fil'shin, loc. cit.
[45]Zoteyev, loc. cit.
[46]*Izvestiya*, Sept. 22, 1989.

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Economic Conversion in the USSR: Its Role in *Perestroyka*

William H. Kincade and T. Keith Thomson

ALTHOUGH the conversion of Soviet economic enterprises from military to civilian production is of central importance to the success of *perestroyka* in the USSR, it is a subject that has been largely overlooked in the West.[1] To be sure, a number of other issues have recently captured the world's attention, including the revolutionary changes in Eastern Europe, the outbreak of national discontent in the Soviet Union, and the continuation of superpower summitry. Specialists on the economy of Soviet military power have also been occupied in gauging Moscow's intentions with regard to its unilateral conventional arms reductions and military force restructuring.

To the extent that interested observers have devoted attention to Soviet attempts at converting defense industries to civilian production, they have greeted Moscow's intentions and the proposed mechanisms for Soviet economic conversion with skepticism.[2] Such skepticism cannot be adequately addressed without an understanding of how the conversion of military industries to civilian production fits into the emerging Soviet macroeconomic strategy. This note examines how conversion is vitally linked, in the Soviet conception, to arms reduction and to *perestroyka*. It also explores the Soviet macroeconomic approach to conversion and its expected benefits, discusses the organization of conversion efforts and how far the process had gone as of the end of 1989, and assesses Soviet appraisals both of the difficulties encountered in conversion and of the future prospects of this effort.

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The Macroeconomic Framework

Mikhail Gorbachev and his reformist allies at the top of the Soviet political hierarchy have promoted *glasnost', perestroyka,* and democratization in an effort to stem the economic crisis that has plagued the Soviet Union since the mid-1970's. Soviet reformers seek to use more open information and the application of "information technologies," greater regime recognition of individual rights and responsibilities, and an emphasis on satisfaction of consumer demand as incentives for higher quality work in their effort to modernize the Soviet economy and move from extensive to intensive economic development.

A number of these policies have met with some suc-

[1]Prominent exceptions include Julian M. Cooper, "The Scales of Output of Civilian Products by Enterprises of the Soviet Defence Industry," Center for Russian and East European Studies Discussion Papers, Soviet Industry and Technology Series, No. 3, Birmingham, England, University of Birmingham, Center for Russian and East European Studies, August 1988; and Stephen Shenfield, "Soviet Views on the Newly Emerging Situation in Europe," Center for Foreign Policy Development at Brown University (Providence, RI), forthcoming (portions of this work deal with the economics and politics of Soviet conversion). Of related interest is John P. Hardt, "Conversion or Chaos," *Bulletin of Atomic Scientists* (Chicago, IL), January-February 1990, p. 20.

[2]See, for example, Steven Rosefielde, "Assessing Soviet Reforms in the Defense Industry," *Global Affairs* (Washington, DC), Fall 1989, pp. 57–73.

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cess, but policies aimed at increasing availability of consumer goods and services have yet to bear fruit. Hence, Soviet commentators and specialists are looking to the conversion of military-production facilities to civilian production as one means of providing some relief to the long-suffering Soviet consumer. Military-production facilities increasingly are viewed as assets for which the country sacrificed a higher quality of life, and which, given a stable international security environment and the reduction of the perceived threat from the West, can now be used to solve the pressing problems of the current economic crisis. According to *Pravda:*

The country created its defense potential over many decades without regard for cost and expense. Soviet people denied themselves a lot, and they are now entitled to expect some return from this sector of the economy, to expect it to help fulfill perestroyka's *important social tasks.*[3]

This view was echoed at a meeting held on October 23, 1989, that addressed the conversion of the Moscow oblast's defense industries. Politburo member, Central Committee Secretary, and (then) Moscow City Party Committee First Secretary Lev Zaykov told local party officials that "the potential accumulated in the defense complex through the labor of several generations of Soviet people should be an important means for the stable socioeconomic development of our country."[4]

Among the many issues in the ongoing Soviet political and economic debate over *perestroyka* are the questions of the appropriate timing and the degree of "marketization." These issues, however, seem to have little direct bearing on the implementation of economic conversion, which has its own logic and momentum apart from the decisions on how soon marketization can be implemented and how far it should be allowed to go.

Reflecting the plans of Soviet reformers, the government has undertaken efforts to manufacture a wide range of consumer products at military-production facilities (see Table 1). The Soviets claim that by 1995 the share of civilian production at military enterprises will rise from 40 percent to 60 percent of their total output.[5]

Conversion is expected to alleviate a variety of economic woes, including widespread shortages, an enormous pool of private savings, a weak ruble, and repressed inflation. Soviet military industrial conversion could absorb "redundant rubles," overcome shortages by "saturating the consumer market," and assist the transition of the ruble to a convertible currency.

Redundant rubles. For the Soviets, the primary purpose of economic conversion is to provide a quick expansion of the range and availability of consumer products in order to absorb the tremendous number of rubles in circulation. Abel Aganbegyan, head of the Economic Branch of the Soviet Academy of Sciences of the USSR and one of Mikhail Gorbachev's chief economic advisers, has singled out balancing of supply and demand in the field of consumer goods and services as "the most important aspect of the projected renewal of the economy." According to Aganbegyan:

In order to redress the imbalance between demand by people with money to spend and what is actually available, we must find goods and services worth tens of billions of rubles. . . . This we call "frustrated demand."

I would say that in gross terms we shall have to find in the next few years consumer goods and services worth 70 billion rubles a year if we are to keep pace with income levels.[6]

The high savings rate resulting from this lack of quality goods is known as "forced savings" and "redundant rubles." In the words of *Izvestiya* commentator Yu. Rytov:

In plain language, when there is nothing to be bought with the rubles which have been paid out, they gather dust either in savings accounts or in "mattresses." Thus deposits with the Savings Bank increased by 17.7 billion rubles during the first six months of [1989] and reached the impressive amount of 314 billion rubles.

A large proportion of this money is certainly not being put aside for "a rainy day." We are talking about really forced savings. After all, this money today is, for all intents and purposes, not [matched by saleable goods.] It is impossible to underestimate the danger of this phenomenon. The incentive to work is being lost. What is the point in working well if there is nowhere to spend the money earned as a result?[7]

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[3]*Pravda* (Moscow), Oct. 12, 1989, translated in Foreign Broadcast Information Service, *Daily Report: Soviet Union* (Washington, DC—hereafter, *FBIS-SOV*), Oct. 18, 1989, p. 104.

[4]*Moskovskaya Pravda* (Moscow), Oct. 24, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 8, 1989, p. 98.

[5]*Pravitel'stvennyy Vestnik* (Moscow), No. 18, September 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 4, 1989, pp. 104–06.

[6]Abel Aganbegyan, *Inside Perestroika: The Future of the Soviet Economy*, New York, Harper and Row, 1989, pp. 15–17.

[7]*Izvestiya* (Moscow), Sept. 10, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 19, 1989, pp. 82–83. Restrictions on alcohol sales, combined with government spending to address the consequences of Chernobyl', natural disasters, and demands for higher wages and benefits, have contributed to growth in the money supply and to an imbalance between it and available commodities.

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Table 1: Consumer-Goods Production by Major Soviet Defense-Industry Ministries Planned or in Progress in 1989, Selected Examples

Ministry of Defense Industry[1]

Washing machines
Cameras and lenses
Enlargers
Movie cameras
Movie projectors
Binoculars
Electronic watches
Baby carriages
Ski poles
Bicycles and sleds
Kitchen cabinets
Garden sheds

Ministry of Ship-Building Industry[1]

Sail boats
Motor launches

Ministry of the Radio Industry

Refrigerators

Ministry of Communications Equipment Industry

Television sets
Tape recorders
Radio-cassette receivers
Radio receivers
Digital laser-disk players

Ministry of Aviation Industry[1]

Cast aluminum ware
Baby carriages
Sleds and toys
Washing machines
Vacuum flasks
Sanders
Spray paint guns
Civil aviation aircraft
Window sills

Ministry of Medium Machine Building

Electronics equipment (computers integrated circuits, etc.)

Ministry of Machine Building

Samovars
Automatic siphons
Primus stoves
Sewing machines

Ministry of Electronics Industry

Videotape recorders
Video cameras
Microelectronic calculators
Electronic clocks and watches
Microwave ovens

Ministry of General Machine Building

Wheelchairs
Artificial limbs
Refrigerators
Washing machines
Baked goods and other foodstuffs

[1]Ministries so designated are also assigned production of food-processing equipment, fertilizer-making equipment, machinery for agro-industry, farm and irrigation equipment, or fur-processing equipment. All these items have consumer end-use implications.

SOURCES: *Izvestiya* (Moscow) Jan. 3, 1989, translated in *Foreign Broadcast Information Service* (Washington, DC), Jan. 5, 1989, pp. 51–54; *Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), Feb. 10, 1989, trans. in ibid., Feb. 13, 1989, pp. 82–84; *Sovetskaya Rossiya*, July 20, 1989, trans. in ibid., July 26, 1989, pp. 90–91; Moscow TASS in English, Sept. 6, 1989, in ibid., Sept. 7, 1989, pp. 72–73; *Pravda* (Moscow), Aug. 28, 1989, trans. in ibid., Sept. 6, 1989, pp. 79–85; *Sotsialisticheskaya Industriya* (Moscow), Sept. 21, 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 4, 1989, pp. 102–04; *Pravda*, Oct. 12, 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 18, 1989, p. 104; *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta* (Moscow), No. 30, 1989, trans. in Joint Publications Research Service, *Soviet Union: Military Affairs*, UMA-89-021, Sept. 6, 1989, pp. 29–30; and *Pravitel'stvennyy Vestnik* (Moscow), No. 4, February 1989, trans. in ibid., UMA-89-011, May 15, 1989, pp. 53–54.

Furthermore, Soviet plans for making the ruble a freely convertible currency in order to integrate the economy into the world trade system are predicated on the ability to remove "redundant" money from domestic circulation gradually, so as to bolster the value of the ruble.

Saturating the market. One possible solution to the problem of excess currency would be a comprehensive devaluation, exchanging "old rubles" for "new rubles." The Soviet leadership has thus far rejected such a policy for its unfavorable social consequences, which include the aggravation of poverty among pensioners and the potential for inciting labor strikes. As an alternative, Soviet policy-makers seek to "saturate" the market with consumer goods, thus soaking up excess rubles. Again, to quote Aganbegyan:

> *The most important thing now is to saturate the consumer market, make it balanced, and bring effective demand into line with volumes of goods and services. Moreover, we are suffering from inflation—the devaluation of money. [In 1988,] the inflation rate increased to 8–9 percent. Of this, 5 percent was the result of direct price rises without the state's consent, while 4 percent was the result of money being devalued by a rise in the amount of money in circulation not backed up by goods.*[8]

Many Soviet analysts believe that the capacity of the economy for consumer-goods production cannot be increased in the short run without drawing upon

[8]*Izvestiya*, Aug. 2, 1989, trans. in ibid., Aug. 4, 1989, pp. 91–94.

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defense-production assets. Commentators and specialists draw direct correlations between the problem of consumer-goods shortages and the conversion of defense industries. In the words of *Pravda:*

The saturation of the consumer market with consumer goods depends to a considerable extent on defense enterprises, which have to sharply increase consumer-goods output within a short period.[9]

Threat of inflation. Aganbegyan's concern about inflation is not unfounded. A revealing article in *Izvestiya,* entitled "Flight From Money: Why Lines Are Forming at Jewelry Stores,"[10] reported that people are desperately seeking to rid themselves of their savings:

People are standing outside a jewelry store in the hope of buying something in gold. Or, let us assume, diamonds. Most of them do not care what they buy, provided it is a little larger and more costly. It is not a passion for adornment that has brought these people here, but a desire to rid themselves of their savings as quickly as possible in return for any valuable commodity not [vulnerable] to inflation.

"Of course, if I had the opportunity, I would prefer a video recorder or good furniture. But you can't buy them! The situation is deteriorating. . . ." That is how Olga Petrovna Galkina, an architect by profession, explained her presence in the line.

To underscore the importance of this phenomenon, the article's author, M. Krushinskiy, asks:

What burden does all this hold for most of us, who are not burdened with "excess" funds? Alas, the "flight from money," if it is not stopped, may snowball, disorganizing the economy, emptying by no means only the jewelry stores. For a growing number of customers the main motive behind these purchases is not a need for some item but a desire to rid themselves of banknotes that have lost [their value] and "exchange them for goods" by any means. Inflation is being given an additional boost.

Krushinskiy suggests several solutions to the problem of "surplus money," including increasing the production and expanding the range of consumer goods (video equipment and furniture), and selling for ready cash goods that were not previously sold to individual citizens—for instance, housing, tractors, and minibuses.

Modernizing industry. Soviet economists also champion conversion as a quick means to introduce modern production methods and equipment into the civilian economy. In July 1989, during discussions between Central Committee Secretary Oleg Baklanov and workers and management of the Malyshev production combine in the Kharkiv defense industrial complex, participants stated

that it was necessary to introduce in the civilian industries as much as possible all the advanced methods used by the defense industry. Specifically, it is most important to transfer to civilian industries the most effective technologies and materials, a high level of the organization of work, and an exacting attitude to the quality of products. It is especially important to promote the growth of labor productivity. There is another promising way: the assimilation of some types of defense machinery in the national economy.[11]

In the October 1989 meeting on conversion of the Moscow region's defense industries, I. S. Belousov, deputy chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers and chairman of the Military-Industrial Commission (in the West also called the Military Production Commission or the State Committee for Military Industrial Questions) stated:

The quality of [Soviet] goods is clearly not as good as the quality of those made in developed capitalist countries. Who besides defense workers can really solve this problem? Who can provide for making television sets at the quality level of Sony, stereo systems at the level of Sharp, cameras at the level of Nikon, and motorcycles at the level of Honda? None other than the defense industry can really provide for this in the next few years![12]

Price reform. Military-civilian conversion also relates to the oft-postponed step of price reform. Some Soviet economists see the introduction of market prices as es-

[9] *Pravda,* July 8, 1989, trans. in ibid., July 31, 1989, p. 92.

[10] *Izvestiya,* Oct. 6, 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 11, 1989, pp. 85–86. Dr. Andrey Anikin of the Institute of the World Economy and International Relations—speaking on "The Soviet Economic Crisis and its Implications for the US" at The American University (Washington, DC) on Nov. 2, 1989—called inflation the most important obstacle to the "modernization" of the Soviet economy. Also a professor of economics at Moscow University and an adviser to the Soviet government, Anikin cited "repressed or suppressed inflation" representing "accumulated purchasing power which does not find outlets in consumer goods and puts pressure on markets" (i.e., drives up prices for scarce goods).

[11] Moscow TASS in English, in ibid., July 31, 1989, p. 122.

[12] *Moskovskaya Pravda,* Oct. 24, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 8, 1989, p. 96.

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sential to the alleviation of consumer shortages. Price reform would allow the market to set prices and consumer demand to establish the product mix of consumer-goods industries.[13] However, price reform is an explosive issue in Soviet politics, for tying prices to the market will mean a reduction of government subsidies to producers and hence higher prices for consumers.

Other economists counsel deferring price reforms out of fear that the price increases that will inevitably accompany such reform will have serious political repercussions. They recommend absorbing surplus rubles by military-production conversion, as well as through the sale of government assets (including converted military equipment), and through allowing people to purchase title to their apartments. Thus far, price reform has been held hostage to first achieving the saturation of the marketplace with consumer goods.[14]

Entering the world market. Military-production conversion can contribute in several ways to attaining one of *perestroyka's* key goals: integration of the Soviet economy into the world economy. First, integration requires the institution of the ruble as a freely convertible currency. In turn, making the ruble a convertible currency necessitates the removal of redundant rubles from circulation.

Second, integrating the Soviet economy into the world economy requires the development of an export trade sector. Defense enterprises can have a direct and important role in developing the new export trade sector. Soviet military and space enterprises are currently exploring civilian markets abroad for buyers of aircraft, optical equipment, space-launch capacity, and other products and services originally developed for military uses. Also under way are sales of decommissioned naval vessels to foreign partners of Soviet joint ventures as a means of repatriating profits, as in the case of Pepsico's purchase of decommissioned submarines for resale in the West.[15]

Joint ventures. In the quest for advanced foreign capital, technology, and management skills, the Soviets are promoting joint production ventures. Such arrangements are also being sought for defense enterprises undergoing conversion.[16] For example, in a joint venture with an American firm, Space Commerce Corp., the Soviet military enterprise Tekhnopribor will participate in the development and marketing of a commercial launch vehicle derived from SS-20 nuclear rocket technology.[17]

Social needs. The reordering of Soviet economic priorities toward economic conversion has a profound social rationale behind it. Aganbegyan is explicit about the role of social problems in prompting this shift:

In the Soviet Union, an unjustifiable gap has opened up between industrial power, science, culture, and the educational level of the population on the one hand, and the level of satisfaction of the material and social needs of the population on the other.

In the last 15 years, as an aspect of the negative processes mentioned above, the fall in the rate of growth and in economic efficiency has been especially painfully reflected in our inability to resolve our social problems. Resources were allocated to the social sector according to the so-called "residual principle," whereby capital investment was firstly directed toward industrial goals, while housing, the raising of living standards, and other improvements in people's lives only received what remained.[18]

Aganbegyan's critical assessment of the economic priorities of the past is a means to establish a new set of economic goals and procedures. He went on to declare:

The aging economic system of administrative commands from above aggravated this unbalanced development, neglecting the social sector, and exacerbating the gap between consumer demand and supply. The market has not been supplied with necessities and the demands for meat, dairy products, fruit, high quality goods, and various services are not being met.[19]

In part, *perestroyka* seeks to address the corrosive effect of the command economy on the morale and

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[13]The problems of economic reform and the various approaches under consideration are detailed in *Ekonomicheskaya Gazeta* (Moscow), No. 43, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 7, 1989, pp. 76–86.

[14]These questions and their relationship to the overall context of *perestroyka* were addressed at the all-Union conference on problems of the radical economic reform in mid-November 1989. More than 1,400 economists, economic managers, and representatives of public organizations, as well as key government and party officials, attended the conference. See Moscow TASS in English, in ibid., Nov. 16, 1989, p. 55.

[15]*Sovetskaya Rossiya* (Moscow), May 17, 1989, trans. in Joint Publications Research Service, *Soviet Union: Military Affairs*, UMA-89-018, July 20, 1989, pp. 45–46.

[16]Igor' Khripunov, First Secretary, Soviet Embassy, Washington, DC, "US-Soviet Relations in the Gorbachev Era," address at Davidson College, Davidson, NC, Oct. 11, 1989.

[17]See John Morocco, "U.S., Soviet Firms to Develop, Market Commercial Booster Based on SS-20," *Aviation Week and Space Technology* (New York, NY), Aug. 7, 1989, p. 21.

[18]Abel Aganbegyan, *The Economic Challenge of Perestroika*, Bloomington, IN, Indiana University Press, 1988, pp. 15–17.

[19]Ibid., p. 16.

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well-being of the Soviet people. Issues are being confronted and remedies are being sought to problems that were officially covered up before *glasnost'*. Aganbegyan expresses this concern:

The stagnation of the economy in the 1981–85 period and the economic crisis implicit were accompanied by a growth in such anti-social processes as speculation, bribery, and the use of one's position for personal ends. The phenomena of stagnation and apathy, consequences of the negative attitudes of development, led to the loss of interest in their work among part of the population and reinforced negative attitudes to public property. Even worse, a tendency to hoard and be greedy developed. Social justice was systematically violated.[20]

The recognition of these social pathologies has driven the process of reform, both discrediting the policies of the past and concentrating the efforts of reformers. According to Aganbegyan:

The new economic and social policy of the [Communist Party] has given top priority to overcoming these unfavorable social phenomena. The whole social sector and the welfare of the people have to be brought into line with the industrial achievements of the country and the actual needs of society. . . . Above all, priorities must be changed and more resources accorded to the development of the whole social sector.[21]

In sum, from the Soviet perspective, conversion of defense production is vitally linked to the social and economic goals of *perestroyka*. The reduction of international tensions over the last several years through arms control agreements, political rapprochement with the West and China, the emphasis on political rather than military solutions to outstanding problems, and other diplomatic initiatives of "new thinking" has reduced perceptions of external threat and provided the conditions for initiating conversion of defense production to civilian uses.

Organizing for Conversion

The economic conversion process in the Soviet Union has been centrally directed and administered. Despite bold initiatives for reform in certain areas of the Soviet economy, the overall administrative and organizational structure of industry, and especially of the defense-production industry (shown in Figure 1), remains strikingly unchanged. Indeed, it is not only that the ministries and ministerial structure from the pre-Gorbachev period have been retained. As of May 1989, six of the nine heads of the ministries most concerned with defense production—those subordinate to the Military-Industrial Commission—have held their posts since at least 1983.[22]

Executive responsibility for coordination of economic conversion resides in the Military-Industrial Commission, as does the continuing responsibility for directing defense production per se.[23] All these ministries have long had the dual assignment of producing both military and civilian goods. What conversion means for them, then, is what we in the West would call "changing their product mix," i. e., shifting more specialized production capability away from defense goods to the manufacture of civilian and consumer items.

Several factors may have led the Soviets to entrust the process of conversion to the defense industry. First, by placing responsibility for conversion with the defense industry, Soviet leaders hoped to overcome any potential resistance to such measures on the part of the industries themselves. Second, according to Politburo member Lev Zaykov, if necessary, military enterprises making civilian goods could be reconverted for the production of military products.[24]

Although the ministerial structure for implementing the comprehensive conversion plan remains thus far unchanged, two new "oversight" panels and commissions have been established to monitor the economic conversion process. The newly reconstituted Supreme Soviet now includes a Standing Committee on Defense and State Security (indicated in Figure 1) that in addition to its responsibility for overseeing the Soviet military is now addressing the issue of conversion.[25] In Oc-

[20]Ibid.

[21]Ibid., p. 17. In remarks to the World Affairs Council of Washington, DC, on Sept. 9, 1989, Aganbegyan repeated the goal of economic conversion: to transform an industrial sector where civilian manufactures accounted for 40 percent of output and the military for 60 percent, to one in which civilian production would rise to 65 percent by the end of the 13th Five-Year-Plan in 1995. The goal for 1990 is to increase the civilian portion to 46 percent. Aganbegyan said not all new production would be consumer-oriented but all would be for civilian use.

[22]The six ministers and their ministries were: Pavel Finogenov (Defense Industry), Erlen Pervyshin (Communications Equipment), Sergey Afanas'yev, (General Machine Building), Petr Pleshkov (Radio Industry), Aleksandr Shokin (Electronics), and Yefim Slavskiy (Atomic Energy [prior to 1989, this was known as the Medium Machine Building Industry]). Slavskiy was replaced in June 1989 by L. Ryabev. See Frederick C. Barghoorn and Thomas F. Remington, *Politics in the USSR*, Boston, Little, Brown, and Co., 1986, Chart 14, pp. 510–12; and Thomas S. Garrison, Ed., *Current World Leaders*, Almanac issue, Vol. 32, No. 4, Santa Barbara, CA, International Academy at Santa Barbara, June 1989, pp. 526–28.

[23]*Pravitel'stvennyy Vestnik*, No. 18, September 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Oct. 4, 1989, pp. 104–06.

[24]*Pravda*, Nov. 27, 1989.

[25]*Krasnaya Zvezda* (Moscow), Oct. 6, 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 10, 1989, pp. 3–4.

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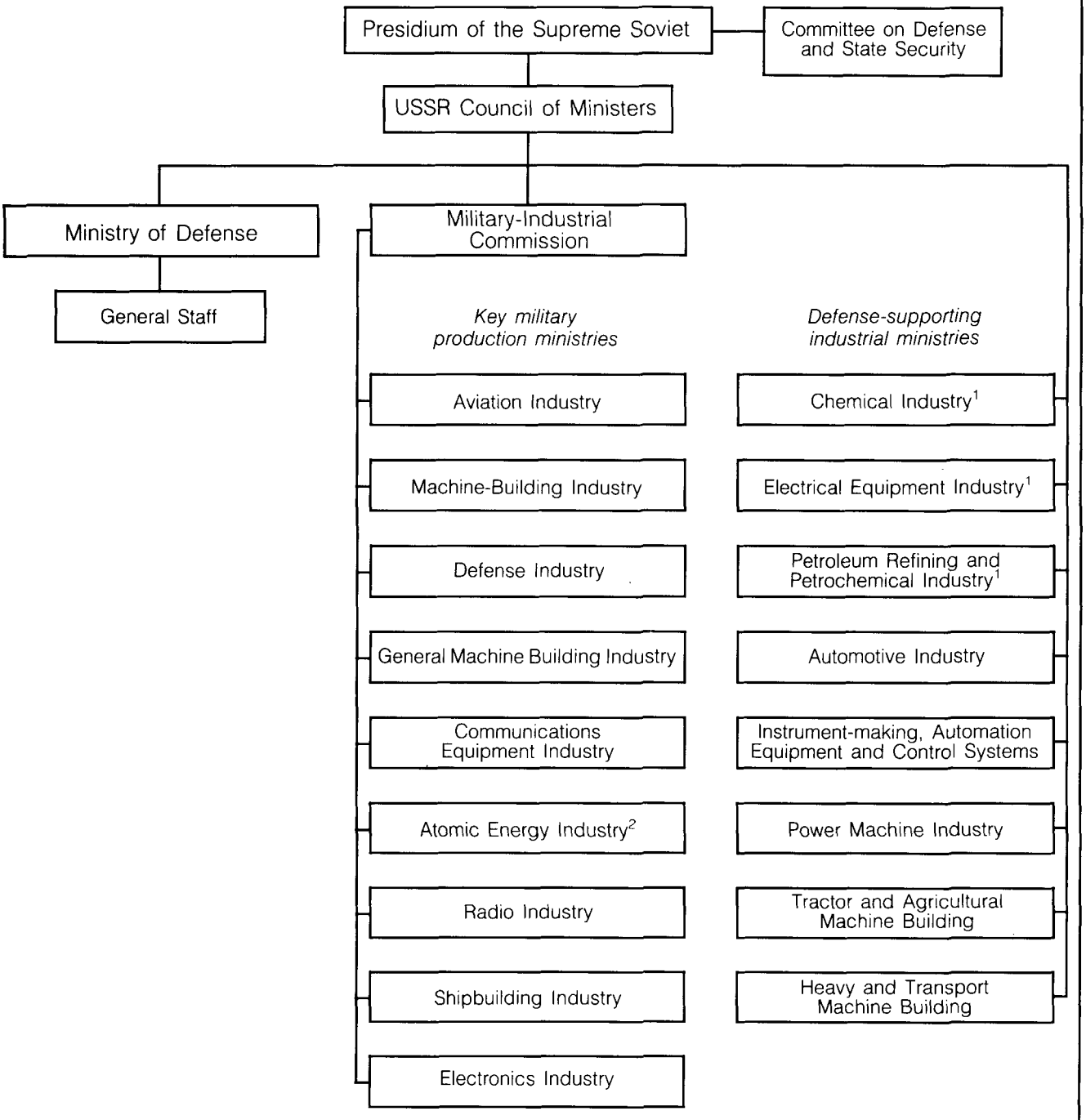
Figure 1: General Organization of Soviet Defense Production



[1]The U.S. Central Intelligence Agency identifies these as "key defense manufacturing ministries," in addition to the nine ministries directly subordinate to the Military-Industrial Commission. See the report of the Director of Central Intelligence: "Soviet Acquisition of Militarily Significant Western Technology: An Update," Washington, DC, September 1985, p. 3, Figure 1.

[2]Prior to 1989, this was known as the Medium Machine Building Industry. (Based on a communication from the Soviet Embassy, Washington, DC.)

SOURCES: In addition to the CIA report cited therein, this figure is compiled from Frederick C. Barghoorn and Thomas F. Remington, *Politics in the USSR*, Boston, Little, Brown, & Co., 1986, Chart 12, pp. 510–13; Allan P. Pollard, Ed., *USSR Facts and Figures Annual*, Vol. 12, Pensacola, FL, Academic International Press, 1988, p. 96; and Thomas S. Garrison, Ed., *Current World Leaders*, Almanac Issue, Vol. 32, No. 4, June 1989, Santa Barbara, CA, International Academy at Santa Barbara, pp. 526–28.

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tober 1989, the USSR Academy of Sciences and the All-Union Central Council of Trade Unions announced formation of a "National Commission for Assistance to Conversion of War Industries to Civilian Production." Sponsored by the Soviet Peace Fund, the commission advocates development of "an integral concept for conversion and its implementation."[26]

In April 1989, what might be referred to in Western interest group analysis as a "peak group" or coalition was formed. Called the "Group for the Public Monitoring of the Reduction of Soviet Armed Forces and Armaments," this organization includes representatives from youth organizations; labor, peace, and friendship societies; and cultural-relations groups. Chaired by leading foreign policy expert Andrey A. Kokoshin, the "Group for Public Monitoring" will visit troop withdrawal sites, but it could also play a role in overseeing economic conversion.[27]

Although it may seem counterproductive to give responsibility for converting military industry to the military-production ministries, few other organizational solutions would avoid additional confusion in the already turbulent Soviet economy. These new "watchdog" organizations, therefore, may play a crucial role in ensuring that the conversion process is not doomed from the start.

Progress to Date

Prior to 1989, efforts at conversion were either taken on an ad hoc basis or focused primarily on the shift of civilian enterprises to the control of military-industry ministries, with some curious results. Thus, in 1987, for example, the 10 industrial facilities of the ailing Ministry of Machine Building for Light and Food Industry and Household Appliances were merged with the defense-related Ministry of Medium Machine Building Industry (later renamed the Ministry of Atomic Energy Industry to reflect its primary responsibilities).[28] Although placing enterprises for the manufacture of food-processing equipment and appliances under a nuclear-weapon and reactor-manufacturing ministry forms an unlikely combination, the rationale was that the former would benefit from what were seen as the more efficient management practices of the latter. No other such mergers have been noted recently, perhaps signifying that this phase of conversion is now complete.

In late 1988, President Gorbachev signaled that conversion efforts would henceforth be undertaken in a more systematic fashion. In a portion of his December 7, 1988, speech to the United Nations General Assembly, he stated:

By all our activities in favor of demilitarizing international relations, we wish to draw attention of the international community to yet another pressing problem—the problem of transition from the economy of armaments to the economy of disarmament.

Is conversion of military production a realistic idea? We think that, indeed, it is realistic.

For its part, the Soviet Union is prepared. In the framework of our economic reform, we are ready to draw up and make public our internal conversion plan . . . to make public our experience in providing employment for specialists from military industry and in using its equipment, buildings, and structures in civilian production.[29]

As events and plans unfolded during 1989, it became clear that Gorbachev was serious about conversion. Numerous reports of conversion appeared in the Soviet media. Tanks were being refitted as traction vehicles for the civilian economy and a joint venture was undertaken with a West German firm to convert SS-20 mobile missile carriers to heavy crane carriages.[30] Trucks, bulldozers, transport aircraft, and other military equipment directly relevant to civilian needs have been sold to civilian enterprises as well.[31] Described by *Pravda* as an "exhibition-cum-sale" of "Military Hardware for Peaceful Purposes," an auction was held in Moscow's Sokolniki Park in late November 1989 to sell equipment and components of converted intermediate-range nuclear missile systems.[32]

The conversion process, if only just beginning, appears to be propelled by a broad social consensus about its desirability. However, the many uncertainties surrounding the change from a command to a more market-oriented economy have naturally provoked sharp and continuing disagreements among Soviet leaders and economic experts. Conversion, however,

[26]Moscow TASS in English, in ibid., Oct. 27, 1989, pp. 95–96.

[27]*Krasnaya Zvezda,* May 16, 1989, trans. in ibid., May 22, 1989, pp. 3–4.

[28]*Krasnaya Zvezda,* June 14, 1989, trans. in ibid., June 22, 1989, pp. 74–76. In all, a "few hundred" enterprises of the abolished Ministry of Machine Building for Light and Food Industry and Household Appliances were transferred to the military-industry ministries in 1987. See *Izvestiya,* Jan. 3, 1989, trans. in ibid., Jan. 5, 1989, pp. 51–54.

[29]*Pravda,* Dec. 8, 1988, trans. in ibid., Dec. 8, 1988, p. 18.

[30]Moscow Television Service in Russian, July 7, 1989, trans. in ibid., July 13, 1989, pp. 88–89; *Krasnaya Zvezda,* Oct. 20, 1989, trans. in ibid., Oct. 24, 1989, pp. 4–6.

[31]*Izvestiya,* July 19, 1989, trans. in ibid., July 26, 1989, p. 90.

[32]See *Pravda,* Nov. 10, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 16, 1989, pp. 106–07. According to the report, "a substantial proportion" of the proceeds from the sale, which was open to foreign buyers, was earmarked for the support of servicemen demobilized by the unilateral Soviet force reductions.

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seemed immune from the larger debate about the pace and extent of economic restructuring that took place within the party and the government in the last quarter of 1989, centering on the radical program proposed by Deputy Premier Leonid Abalkin. Moreover, even in military quarters, little evidence of resistance to conversion can be seen.[33]

Throughout 1989, numerous high-level conferences took place in Moscow on conversion plans and problems. Then, on November 9, 1989, the Soviet government announced plans to submit to the Congress of People's Deputies a "State Program for the Conversion of the Defense Industry in 1991–1995," to be prepared by the Military Industrial Commission, the State Planning Committee (Gosplan), the Ministry of Defense, and the defense-industry ministries.[34]

Among other functions, the State Program for Conversion will determine the specific military-industrial capacity to be released for civilian manufactures. Although for this reason the State Program may not be published (no mention of it was noted in the Soviet media as of mid-January 1990), debate over its provisions in the Supreme Soviet did reveal an interest in entering the international commercial aviation market.[35]

Conversion is still in its infancy, and therefore its effectiveness cannot yet be judged. However, as a result of the planning and conference activity in 1989, some Soviet officials and academic specialists are better apprised of the difficulties entailed in a transformation of this kind.

Problems of Conversion

Major operational problems have plagued economic conversion efforts thus far undertaken in the Soviet Union. Among them are the recurrent systemic problems of a command economy: bottlenecks, inadequate transportation networks, low labor productivity and morale, and vertical integration within ministries that leads to inefficient duplication. Economic restructuring entails new problems that affect conversion, including pressure to improve the quality of goods, the introduction of self-financing requirements, and manufacturing for a market while no market in the Western sense of the term yet exists.

The fact that defense-production ministries have been involved in both civilian- and military-goods production does not necessarily simplify the expansion of their civilian-goods output. Indeed, it appears that this change is encountering problems similar to those one would expect if a large and diversified American firm directed its defense divisions to make consumer goods: habits developed in producing for one kind of client are obstacles to producing for another kind of client.[36]

Production, fabrication, and assembly techniques suited to making military equipment exclusively—from rifle rounds to fighter planes—are generally not readily adaptable to civilian production, if they can be adapted at all. Hence, conversion of military industries will require substantial injections of funds. As USSR Minister of Defense Dmitriy Yazov explained:

Major capital and financial investments are also necessary for the conversion of some military production capacities. After all, it is a question of converting enterprises to other types of production, replacing technologies and equipment, retraining cadres, and making additional payments to increase average monthly wages because of the enforced production stoppages.[37]

Even when a plant makes items with both civilian and military applications (generators, switches, pumps, electronic components, etc.)—as is true of some Soviet facilities—military performance standards often necessitate design differences or use of higher-quality materials. Shifting the product mix to consumer output could mean only that more relaxed standards and lower-grade materials are used, not that a mixed production facility will inevitably produce goods of higher quality, as some Soviet commentators seem to think. And in fact some complain that consumer goods made in military-production facilities are no better than those

[33]Resentment about conversion has been expressed by workers whose pay has been reduced or who will require retraining, as well as by citizens concerned by what they see as a lack of reciprocity in the West. See Moscow TASS in English, Aug. 30, 1989, in ibid., Aug. 30, 1989, pp. 85–86; and *Krasnaya Zvezda*, Sept. 22, 1989, trans. in ibid., Sept. 28, 1989, pp. 4–5.

[34]*Pravda*, Nov. 10, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 16, 1989, pp. 106–07.

[35]Moscow television broadcast the Supreme Soviet debate, in which Yevgeniy Velikhov, vice-president of the USSR Academy of Sciences and a member of the Supreme Soviet Standing Committee on Defense and State Security, criticized the program for not exploiting the export potential of the aviation industry more fully. See Moscow Television Service in Russian, Oct. 31, 1989, trans. in ibid., Nov. 2, 1989, p. 56. A member of the Committee on Defense and State Security's subcommittee for the defense industry, Mikhail Simonov, described Soviet plans for switching from military-aviation to commercial-aviation exports in an interview that appeared in Novosti Press Agency, *Military Bulletin* (Moscow), No. 21, November 1989.

[36]Conventional wisdom among corporate executives of American firms making products for both the Department of Defense and the consumer or civilian market is that they would never let the managers, engineers, or other personnel "from the military side of the house" become involved in civilian production activities because they are too accustomed to designing or costing for a single and largely forgiving customer rather than for a competitive marketplace.

[37]*Izvestiya*, Sept. 17, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 18, 1989, p. 3.

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made in civilian plants and are priced too high.[38]

The difficulty of converting enterprises to production for civilian needs while simultaneously shifting to enterprise accountability and self-financing places a special burden on managers and workers at these facilities. As economist Aleksey Kireyev recently wrote:

Enterprises losing defense orders find themselves in a difficult financial position in conditions of economic accountability. The costs of the simplest civilian output produced by them are often ten or more times higher than the current list prices; once high-technology defense plants start producing consumer goods, they start losing their skilled work force.[39]

Serving the demands of the consumer market is an unfamiliar operating climate for Soviet managers accustomed to meeting quotas passed down from the center. Kireyev observed:

Conversion presupposes that defense industry enterprises manufacture the civilian output that is most in line with their preconversion range, enjoys market demand, and ensures the maintenance of a sufficiently high profitability and consequently the social level of their employees. What we call conversion is at times no such thing in the literal sense of the word: it is rather a decreed involvement of the defense sector in helping out the faltering civilian sectors without taking any special notice of the defense enterprises' interests.[40]

Aleksey Izyumov, an economist and a prominent Soviet specialist on conversion, has written:

Practically all of the announced cases of conversion take place inside the ministries of the defense complex, without moving the enterprises to the jurisdiction of civilian organs of authority. Moreover, a reverse phenomenon is developing—poorly operating civilian enterprises are being placed under the wing of military-industrial ministries.

But the capabilities of the military enterprises should not be overestimated. It should not be forgotten that civilian production will never have a priority in enterprises that remain within the framework of the military complex. Today, for example, almost all refrigerators, an overwhelming proportion of television sets, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, and certain other types of everyday equipment are produced in military plants. However can we say the quality of these commodities satisfies us?[41]

Prospects

Final judgment on the eventual success of conversion would, of course, be premature. The increasing prominence given conversion as an element of *perestroyka* during 1989 and the continuing identification of the problems to be surmounted appear to be overcoming earlier naive expectations and may provide the resolve and the conditions needed for an effective conversion program. Yet, as Izyumov has warned, conversion

should not be counted on as a panacea. If conversion is conducted skillfully and effectively, it, of course, will help us get out of the crisis, but the long-term resolution lies on the path of radical economic reform. Without it, sooner or later we will "eat up" our military billions in the same way we "ate up" our oil billions earlier.[42]

Economists in both the East and the West are accustomed to thinking in terms of "the long run." By contrast, government officials must cope with the more vexing imperatives of change in the short term. For the Soviets, the central issue seems to be not whether *perestroyka* in general, or the related process of economic conversion in particular, can ultimately succeed, but rather how well and how soon. Soviet planners and officials have given themselves until 1995 to accomplish a major industrial shift from military to civilian and consumer production. Whether their goals can be achieved will depend on a complex set of psychological, political, and economic factors, including the confidence of Soviet citizens in their government, the willingness and ability of party and government officials to implement *perestroyka*, and actions taken by foreign powers.

[38]See fn. 41; also, Aleksey Kireyev in an excerpt from *Ogonek* (Moscow), No. 19, May 1989, trans. by Thomas H. Hoisington in *The Bulletin of Atomic Scientists*, January-February 1990, p. 18.

[39]*Pravda*, Sept. 13, 1989, trans. in *FBIS-SOV*, Sept. 19, 1989, p. 1.

[40]Ibid.

[41]*Literaturnaya Gazeta*, July 12, 1989, trans. in ibid., July 25, 1989, pp. 99–103.

[42]Ibid., p. 103.

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Books

Soviet Propaganda and Active Measures

James P. Nichol

PAUL MERCER. *"Peace" of the Dead: The Truth Behind the Nuclear Disarmers*. London, Policy Research Publications, Ltd., 1986.

MARTIN EBON. *The Soviet Propaganda Machine.* New York, McGraw-Hill, 1987.

BRIAN D. DAILEY and PATRICK J. PARKER. Eds. *Soviet Strategic Deception.* Lexington, MA, Lexington Books, 1987.

JOSEPH S. GORDON, Ed. *Psychological Operations: The Soviet Challenge*. Boulder, CO, Westview, 1988.

THE DECADE of the 1980's saw a resurgence in Western scholarly and official interest in the study of Soviet propaganda and active measures. Major efforts were undertaken to assimilate and build upon previous analyses, and an academic and governmental consensus emerged regarding the importance of a sustained study of propaganda and active measures as integral components of Soviet foreign policy.[1]

This development, if sustained, would mark a real departure, inasmuch as interest in such matters has tended to be cyclical, loosely correlating with periods of increased or decreased Western involvement with the Soviet Union, either positive or negative. An early peak in analysis of Soviet propaganda came in the late 1940's and 1950's; it was partly based on general knowledge of propaganda gained during World War II. Interest was sustained by the cold war and by public revulsion over communist "brainwashing" techniques witnessed during the Korean conflict, but flagged in the 1960's (despite the Cuban Missile Crisis). It rebounded in the 1970's, probably in connection with the strategic arms limitation negotiations (SALT).

In the late 1970's, the apparent role of Soviet propaganda and active measures in successfully preventing deployment of the enhanced radiation warhead ("neutron bomb") in Western Europe stimulated renewed interest in the analysis of Soviet propaganda campaigns and techniques. The worsening of superpower relations as a result of the deployment of Soviet SS-20 intermediate range ballistic missiles and the massive (if ultimately unsuccessful) Soviet propaganda campaign to prevent countervailing NATO deployments, lent additional impetus to such research. Awareness of Mikhail Gorbachev's skillful use of both policy and rhetoric to defuse international tensions intensified the interest.

As the need for a more sustained analytical effort became apparent, new resources for such study were becoming available. In the 1980's, there was an increase in the number of Sovietologists, and more government funding was allocated for Soviet studies in general and for

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[1] In academe, a notable effort was the 1986 establishment under Ladislav Bittman of a Program for the Study of Disinformation at Boston University's College of Communications. The first major research project of the Program, *The New Image Makers: Soviet Propaganda and Disinformation Today*, published in 1988, included discussion of propaganda policy change during the first two years of the Gorbachev period. See also Ladislav Bittman, Ed., *Gorbachev's Glasnost': Challenges and Realities*, Boston University, College of Communications, Program for the Study of Disinformation Papers, Vol. 2, No. 4, Spring 1989.

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studies of propaganda and active measures in particular. New technical capabilities expanded the possibilities for studying communications. In the area of content analysis, these included vastly improved text-scanning hardware and an explosion in the size of computer memories and storage capacities. In media analysis, satellite dishes and satellites have facilitated the study of Soviet television.

The books under review exemplify this new wave of analysis of propaganda and active measures undertaken in the early to mid-1980's. Although they do not provide a comprehensive assessment of Soviet propaganda efforts that have been undertaken during the Gorbachev period, many of the authors examined the history of Soviet propaganda and correctly discerned—on the basis of Gorbachev's first year or so in office—that the General Secretary has resurrected many propaganda techniques of the Lenin era.

DEFINITIONS are a primary problem in the study of propaganda and active measures. As several of the authors under review agree, a lack of semantic clarity or consensus has contributed to the cyclical and disjointed—rather than incremental, sustained, and unified—evolution of research in the field. To some extent, all the authors must first address a common misperception that propaganda deals with "lies." Such a "definition" leads to the feeling that propaganda should not be an instrument of normal relations between nations, and should be used only in extraordinary instances such as wartime. It is a short step from this misperception to the judgment that propaganda does not merit serious study in peacetime.

In a recent effort to standardize terminology, Garth Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell offered the following useful definition of "propaganda":

The deliberate and systematic attempt to shape perceptions, manipulate cognitions, and direct behavior to achieve a response that furthers the desired intent of the propagandist.[2]

Jowett and O'Donnell stress that "propaganda" differs from "persuasion" in that the propagandist has a concealed primary goal of convincing the recipient to act in a certain way rather than one of enhancing the well-being of the recipient. They also distinguish between "white," "grey," and "black" propaganda. They subsume what is usually meant by the term "disinformation" under the category of "black" or "falsely attributed" propaganda.[3]

"Disinformation" refers to a technique of concealing the source of biased or untruthful information by placing the information in controlled or naïve media, often in the Third World. Then the information is further disseminated by the source and falsely attributed to the medium where it first "appeared."

All of the authors under review more or less adhere to the standard definitions proffered by Jowett and O'Donnell, but many of the authors seek to include propaganda and disinformation within wider concepts such as "active measures," "strategic deception," or "psychological operations." None of these wider concepts appear to be adequately defined, however. Some of the authors in the reviewed works (Martin Ebon, David Hertzberg, Richards Heuer, and David Yost) define "disinformation" as a type of "active measure," although there is no agreement on what the latter term embraces.

The term "active measures" (from the Russian "*aktivnyye meropriyatiya*") is often used without definition, is given different meanings by the same author, or is given a vague, all-inclusive definition. Ebon mentions the term but focuses on disinformation (pp. 312–34). Arnold Beichman in the Brian Dailey and Patrick Parker work reviewed here uses the term "active measures" but does not define it (pp. 77–90). David Yost, in the same work, defines active measures as embracing covert activities such as disinformation, forgeries, and blackmail (p. 349). He excludes activities of local communist parties and front organizations, while David Hertzberg in the Gordon work includes these as part of the definition. Richards Heuer, in the Dailey and Parker work, defines "active measures" as embracing both covert and overt activities, including disinformation, forgeries, use of agents of influence, and even Soviet leaders' deceptive statements, such as Khrushchev's hints and remarks in the late 1950's and early 1960's that the Soviet Union possessed many strategic nuclear missiles (pp. 22–24). He excludes from the definition forms of Soviet deception such as counterintelligence operations and military *maskirovka*—a combat-support activity embracing camouflage, cover, and denial.

A major part of the problem of defining Soviet active measures is the lack of a published Soviet definition. The term is almost never found in Soviet open sources, and Western knowledge of Soviet use of the term is largely dependent upon émigré accounts.[4] Western definitions based on such accounts tend to be

[2]Garth S. Jowett and Victoria O'Donnell, *Propaganda and Persuasion*, Beverly Hills, CA, SAGE Publications, Inc., 1986, p. 16. This definition draws on several earlier works: Baruch Hazan, *Soviet Propaganda—A Case Study of the Middle East Conflict*, Jerusalem, Israel University Press, 1976; and Leonard W. Doob, *Public Opinion and Propaganda*, 2nd ed., Hamden, CT, Archon Books, 1966, pp. 240–45.

[3]Op. cit., pp. 17–18, 34.

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vague and over-inclusive. Testimony before a US Congressional committee stated that "active measures"

are intended to influence the policies of foreign governments . . . . [They] consist of a wide range of activities, both overt and covert, including: manipulation or control of the media; written or oral disinformation; use of foreign communist parties and front organizations; manipulation of mass organizations; clandestine radio broadcasting; economic activities; military operations; and other political influence operations.[5]

In practice, this definition raises analytical questions. For instance, to what extent are military operations part of active measures?[6] John Dziak in the Dailey and Parker volume addresses this question to some extent (pp. 15–16). However, he treats these operations as part of a wider concept of "strategic deception," which includes active measures. As Dailey and Parker define the term, "strategic deception" refers to

a political and/or military strategy that conceals its true goals. Included within it are the propaganda, active measures, and policy statements by the national leadership that implement this strategy; the concealment of intentions or misrepresentation of information to gain advantage through arms control negotiations; and finally, those measures that act to limit or preclude Western knowledge of strategic [matters]. (p. xvi)

Dailey and Parker admit that such a broad definition tends to be all-encompassing, bearing on all aspects of Soviet behavior (p. xvii). Somewhat paradoxically, they conclude that use of their term should be abandoned in favor of use of subsidiary terms in the definition (p. xix)! Authors of individual chapters in the volume did not always adhere to even parts of the definition, preferring to use other terms. Notra Trulock contributes a chapter on *maskirovka*. He sees *maskirovka* as a form of "reflexive control," another Soviet term, which he and the pseudonymous Clifford Reid adopt to describe the exercise of influence over the perceptions and decisions of one's opponent.

The Joseph Gordon volume uses terms other than those already discussed, preferring instead the term "psychological operations"—defined broadly as "information and action directed at foreign audiences to further . . . policy goals" (p. 1). The term "psychological operations" is, one infers, equivalent to the terms propaganda or public diplomacy, raising the question of why the standard term "propaganda" is not used throughout the book.

Perhaps the problem of definition is unavoidable given the complexity of the subject matter, and in time, scholars will come to some minimal agreement about the meaning of such terms as active measures and disinformation. In the meantime, the plethora of terms and definitions, despite the efforts made in the volumes under review, remains an impediment to the further intellectual development of this important area of study.

The books under review represent various treatments or genres of Soviet propaganda analysis. Mercer and Ebon both "expose" alleged front organizations, while Ebon's book also provides a light overview of the instruments and forms of Soviet propaganda. The books edited by Dailey and Parker and by Gordon are collections of articles representing, on the whole, a mature level of specialized research.

DESPITE its sensational title, the Mercer book is an exhaustively researched and well-documented history of the British-based Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament (CND). The author discusses the links between CND and the British Labour and Communist parties and describes the operations of similar communist-manipulated "peace" organizations elsewhere in Eastern and Western Europe. The book demonstrates how communists have manipulated the agendas of CND and the peace movement, for example by trying to forestall grassroots efforts by CND members to protest against the Soviet military threat (pp. 209, 243).

Ebon's book, rather than focusing on a single front organization, provides a thematic overview of the political use made by the Soviet leadership of media and other means of communications to manage domestic and international perceptions. The author demonstrates convincingly that propaganda and active measures have been a fundamental instrument of policy since the early Soviet period and re-

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[4]US Government attempts to find Soviet use of the term turned up only a single example, a Soviet document submitted to the United Nations, where the term may or may not have been used deliberately (that is, as a phrase referring to influence activities). See *Soviet Active Measures*, Hearings Before the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, US House of Representatives, 97th Congress, 2nd Session, July 13, 14, 1982, Washington, DC, US Government Printing Office, 1982, pp. 214, 312.

[5]Ibid., p. 32. The term is given an almost identical definition in Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*, Washington, DC, Pergamon-Brassey's International Defense Publishers, 1984, pp. 2, 193.

[6]See *Soviet Active Measures*, pp. 31–33, 36–43, 50, 228–29. Although military operations are included as an aspect of active measures, activities of the Main Intelligence Directorate (*Glavnoye Razvedyvatel'noye Upravleniye*—GRU) are not indicated in a chart depicting the Soviet apparatus for active measures in the United States (p. 229).

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main so in the Gorbachev era.

Although the book covers only the period through 1986, Ebon discerns a marked shift away from such Marxist-Leninist terminology as "class warfare" and "Western imperialism" to more neutral terminology in Soviet communications to Western audiences, although he understandably underestimated how far this de-ideologization would eventually go. He cautioned that such de-ideologization should not be mistaken for an abandonment of commitment to the overthrow of capitalism (pp. 398–400).

Ebon attempts to outline the personnel and institutions involved in propaganda and active measures, but his reliance on secondary sources precludes any real understanding of the formation and execution of policy. Of more value are his biographies of Soviet propagandists—in particular, Willi Munzenberg.[7] The chapters on this man, who organized the International Workers' Aid and other early communist front organizations, well illustrate the importance that the Soviets have attached to the activities of fronts, belying prevalent Western academic and public views that regarded them as unimportant.[8]

In the early 1920's, Munzenberg explained that front organizations should "say to everyone that Russia will give up everything, is ready to humble itself, will do all that is imaginable, just so world peace is maintained" (p. 60). The theme resurfaced in 1949 when a World Peace Congress in Prague set the stage for formation of what is now called the World Peace Council; without acknowledging an intellectual debt to Munzenberg, Mikhail Suslov at the November 1949 meeting of the Communist Information Bureau (Cominform) hailed the new "peace" organization for attempting to "save mankind from another world war, to isolate the warmonger clique, and to ensure peaceful cooperation among nations" (Ebon, pp. 83, 86, 99) Yet, in August 1949, the Soviet Union successfully exploded its first nuclear fission bomb!

The Soviets have made extensive use of another Munzenberg tactic—the use of "fellow travelers" (apologists for Soviet policy) as propagandists.[9] Writers, scholars, and journalists were prime targets for recruitment or manipulation, and Ebon examines the cases of Theodore Dreiser, André Gide (who was repulsed by deception methods experienced during his tour of the Soviet Union and wrote a critical account of the experience), Lion Feuchtwanger, Walter Duranty, Lillian Hellman, Howard Fast (who finally broke with communism), Jean-Paul Sartre, Anna Louise Strong, Wilfred Peter Burchett, and Bertrand Russell.

In 1955, Russell, more iconoclast than fellow traveler, co-authored with Albert Einstein a manifesto entitled "Man's Peril," which called for nuclear disarmament. In 1958, Russell became the first president of the newly formed CND, which, as Paul Mercer explains, was quickly infiltrated with British Communist Party members at the highest levels of control and with disparate leftist groups (including Trotskyites) at the lower levels of membership.

During the Gorbachev period, Soviet propaganda aimed at the West has selectively interpreted the Einstein-Russell peace efforts to suit Moscow's objectives, and Gorbachev's concept of "new thinking" in foreign policy has been linked to these efforts.[10] It is not by chance that many of Gorbachev's striking "peace" initiatives also bear strong resemblance to those of Munzenberg and Lenin: the Soviet Union once again finds itself in a "consolidationist" period of its foreign policy, i.e., is seeking to defuse external threats at a time of perceived internal weakness.

DAILEY and Parker's *Soviet Strategic Deception* is the outgrowth of a conference held at the Naval Postgraduate School (Monterey, California) in September 1985. The contributions are of somewhat uneven quality, but many provide rich detail on specific topics and most adhere to the principal theme of the meeting. Although the bulk of the research examines the pre-Gorbachev period, the volume

[7]Other figures treated include Leonid Zamyatin, Victor Louis, Georgiy Arbatov, and Vladimir Posner. Subsequent changes in personnel and responsibilities in the Soviet propaganda apparatus in 1985–86 might have dictated somewhat different choices.

[8]In many books on Soviet foreign policy, there is still a tendency to omit treatment of fronts as an instrument of Soviet international behavior. A textbook that does acknowledge (but does not really analyze) the role of fronts is Richard F. Staar, *USSR Foreign Policies After Detente*, Stanford, CA, Hoover Institution Press, 1987, pp. 66–72.

[9]For a fuller treatment of academic fellow-traveling, see Leopold Labedz, *The Uses and Abuses of Sovietology*, New Brunswick, NJ, Transaction Publishers, 1989.

[10]According to Françoise Thom, the term "new thinking" is a "semantic borrowing" from the writings of Russell and Einstein, in order to use "Western liberal ideas and expressions in . . . the service of international communism." See *Moscow's "New Thinking" as an Instrument of Foreign Policy*, Mackenzie Paper No. 4, Toronto, Canada, The Mackenzie Institute, 1987, p. 5.

There is some evidence of the term's being linked by the Soviets in a post hoc way to Einstein. In an article by Aleksandr Bovin, "New Thinking—A Requirement of the Nuclear Age," *Kommunist* (Moscow), No. 10, July 1986, the author quotes Einstein to the effect that " 'For mankind to survive and develop further . . . a new method of human thinking is needed. Today the atom bomb has fundametally changed the world; we know this, and people find themselves in a new situation, to which their thinking must correspond.' "

Also, in a roundtable on international affairs reported in *New Times*, Alexander Galkin is reported as stating: "The concept of the new political thinking brings together many elements, some of which are not of recent growth. Einstein spoke of the need for new thinking back in 1945 . . . the Marxist dialectic conception of the world gave our party the key to developing the new thinking . . . ." See "October Revolution, Peace, Peaceful Coexistence," *New Times* (Moscow), No. 44, 1987, p. 6.

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still represents a significant addition to research on propaganda and active measures.[11]

The contributions are gathered together into sections that deal with the organizational structure of deception; cases of deception undertaken by the Soviet military; deception in the areas of arms control and strategic planning; and deception campaigns related to the intermediate nuclear force (INF) deployment, the Nicaraguan revolution, and Soviet air-defense deployments in Syria. The volume provides scant analysis of the modern institutions that formulate and execute deception policy. Richards Heuer's serviceable but too-brief overview (pp. 21–54) assigns a central role to the Communist Party Central Committee's International Department (ID) in the formation of Soviet foreign policy, including deception plans and operations. Although this interpretation appears plausible, some analyses would not agree with the centrality Heuer accords the ID in these matters.[12] In this context, it might be noted that the current ID chief, Valentin Falin, was only recently elevated to full membership in the Central Committee, and has not achieved the alternate Politburo or Secretariat member status, held, respectively, by his two predecessors, Boris Ponomarev and Anatoliy Dobrynin.

Heuer's observation that the emplacement of Soviet missiles in Cuba was exposed because of Soviet laxity regarding *maskirovka*, is tantalizing, but fails to explore the implications of this breakdown. If the discovery of the missiles was a major failure of *maskirovka*, it must have led the Soviets to purge leading personnel and improve their camouflage, concealment, and deception efforts, making them subsequently more dangerous to the West.

John Lenczowski's contribution to the Dailey and Parker volume enumerates several deception themes that have been reiterated ad nauseum by the Soviet Union in the effort to convince the West that it is a peace-loving state:

- The ideology of Marxism-Leninism is dead;
- Factions in the Kremlin reflect divisions between "Westernists" and Stalinists;
- New leaders make a difference to foreign policy;
- The Soviet Union is in the process of Westernizing;
- Soviet military doctrine is defensive;
- The Soviets need arms control in order to revitalize their economy;
- The Soviet Union has not opposed US foreign policy;
- The Soviet Union follows the policy of "peaceful coexistence";
- International communism is dead, and Soviet goals are limited (pp. 59–68).

Many of these themes were spread by the front organizations set up by Willi Munzenberg in the 1920's. Some are also reflected in the major themes played upon in the Gorbachev period: the decline of ideology in the Soviet Union, the shift to a "truly defensive" military doctrine, the need to divert resources to economic development, and the evolution of the Soviet Union away from totalitarianism.

Lenczowski's interpretation of these themes as entirely deceptive rather than as a mix of deception and the realities of economic decline and ideological crisis during the Gorbachev period is a major weakness of his article. At one point, the author even suggests that Soviet institutions of government, the constitution, and even elections are efforts to deceive the West (p. 71).

Lenczowski also explores various "exculpatory" themes, ones that explain or excuse Soviet misdeeds, such as traditional Russian paranoia regarding invasion or a "penchant for secrecy." Whether or not there is some truth to such themes (Robert Bathurst gives credence to the role of the fear of invasion in determining Soviet behavior; see p. 110), rote repetition of them by outside observers can lead to dangerous misunderstanding of Soviet behavior.

A MAJOR thesis of the Dailey and Parker book is that the West is extremely vulnerable to Soviet deception. Western strategic decision-making is one important area of vulnerability examined. As outlined by Angelo Codevilla, Heuer, William Graham, and Thomas Rona, when Soviet secrecy results in Western near-ignorance about Soviet behavior, even a few deceptive pieces of information can greatly influence strategic decision-making. Examples given by Rona include the 1950's "bomber gap," and the late-1950's "missile gap"—both cases where sketchy and incorrect information led to erroneous defense planning on the part of the United

[11]This book follows in the footsteps of Donald C. Daniel and Katherine L. Herbig, *Strategic Military Deception*, New York, Pergamon Press, 1982, which dealt more broadly with methodology and case studies of military deception. Another edited book on the subject of Soviet deception was published during the same year as the Dailey and Parker volume, even sharing some of the same contributors. See Raymond S. Sleeper, Ed., *Mesmerized by the Bear: The Soviet Strategy of Deception*, New York, Dodd, Mead, & Co. 1987.

[12]The exact role of the ID in the policy-making process probably depends on its level of staffing and the position of its chief in higher party bodies. It has never had a chief who was a full member of the Politburo, although the ministries of defense and foreign affairs—bodies under its supervision according to Heuer—have had ministers who were full Politburo members. It is hard to imagine that the chief of the ID would be more influential in policy-making than these ministers. For a general analysis of the policy-making roles of Central Committee departments vis-à-vis ministries, see Jerry Hough (with Merle Fainsod), *How the Soviet Union Is Governed*, Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1979, pp. 440–43.

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States (pp. 504–05). At the very least, deceptive information contributes to Western confusion and policy paralysis. Uri Ra'anan tends to be more optimistic than some of his fellow contributors regarding the ability of trained Western analysts to separate truth from Soviet deception (pp. 138–39).

Arms control negotiations are also extremely vulnerable to Soviet deception, according to William Harris, Parker, Richard Staar, and Dailey. Dailey argues that the Soviets wanted the Anti-Ballistic-Missile (ABM) Treaty in 1972 in order to slow down and halt US advances, while the USSR was developing its own ABM capability. He concludes that given the Soviet military build-up of the 1970's, the US should give serious consideration to the actual reasons why the Soviets pursue further limitations on active defense programs. In regard to the arms control process in general, he rightly points to Soviet refusal to divulge basic information about the very strategic systems under negotiation as harmful to the concept of mutual arms control (p. 249).[13]

It is also important to assess the underlying reasons for the vulnerability of Western audiences to deception. Soviet success in deception during the ABM Treaty negotiations was due, Dailey states, to the Soviet ability to exploit US cultural predilections to give the Soviets the benefit of the doubt and to the official US mythology that ballistic missile defense was unfeasible. According to Bathurst, Western audiences possess powerful predispositions to believe or accede to Soviet deception, i.e., to be self-deceived. He traces these predispositions to a psychological dislike of ambiguity, belief in the Greek notion of moderation and balance, an orientation to the short term, respect for the individual, an understanding of international relations as denoting only relations between states, and an orientation to the "dysteleological" rather than the "teleological" (p. 110).

The themes, goals, and results of Soviet deception are superbly outlined in David Yost's case study of the Soviet campaign against INF deployments in West Germany. Beginning in earnest after the December 1979 NATO decision to deploy INF, the Soviet Union launched a consistent thematic campaign to head off deployment. Although the campaign failed to achieve its immediate objective, it had a long-term negative impact on NATO by fostering the polarization of political parties and elites over defense, "delegitimizing" the US nuclear presence in Western Europe, and socializing youth to support neutralist, if not pro-Soviet positions. Yost admits that the causation here is complex, and that the Soviet campaign is not the sole source of the noted trends, but he speaks to the need to pay more attention to "perceptions management," which he terms "one of the single most important (and most neglected) areas in national security studies" (p. 369).

The volume generally strikes a pessimistic note regarding the future of the Soviet political system, concluding that recent levels of deception will be maintained or increased under Gorbachev. Robert Conquest views the Gorbachev generation as Stalinists—the "products of Stalin's party"—and he foresees no serious change in Soviet political culture and psychology.[14] Since this collection appeared, apparent changes have taken place in four "litmus test" areas listed by Conquest—party and state institutions, tolerance of ideas, arms reduction and cessation of expansionism, and "truth telling." The issue is whether such changes are real or deceptive—a fitting theme for an updated volume.

JOSEPH Gordon's slim volume, like the Dailey and Parker volume, grew out of panel papers—in this case, ones delivered at the 1983 Annual Meeting of the International Studies Association in Monterey, California. The papers were only marginally updated, and were supplemented by others—mostly reprints or (apparently) government documents in the public domain. The latest information dates from 1985, so that the volume also represents Soviet activities in the pre-Gorbachev era. Indeed, the editor states that the impetus for renewed study of psychological operations and for the book was the East-West competition of the early 1980's, typified by the breakdown of various arms negoti-

[13]Soviet negotiators themselves have criticized past Soviet practices that denied them information necessary to arms negotiations. *This issue was brought up at the Scientific and* Practical Conference at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in July 1988. Deputy Foreign Minister Yuliy Vorontsov reported that the participants in the conference "said that an end must be put at long last to the absurd situation where data on our armed forces known to the rest of the world are kept secret from Soviet people, including those specializing in military-strategic problems." See "The Military-Political Aspects of Security," *International Affairs* (Moscow), October 1988, p. 42. See also Viktor Israelyan, "On Diplomatic Negotiations," ibid., January 1989, p. 78.

An example of the constraints under which the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs had to operate in negotiating arms control is the late Marshal Andrey Grechko's aside to the US delegation to the SALT I talks that Soviet diplomats had no need to know the details of Soviet weapons systems; details of these systems were eventually supplied by the US delegation when no data were forthcoming from the Soviet side. The predominance of the military on the Soviet SALT delegation is discussed in Joseph G. Whelan, *Soviet Diplomacy and Negotiating Behavior*, Vol. 1, US House of Representatives, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Special Studies Series on Foreign Affairs Issues, Committee Print, 1979, pp. 454–57.

[14]Conquest does acknowledge the existence of an alternative tradition in Russian political psychology that emerged after 1860—a Western-style democratic ethos—but he argues that it has been successfully suppressed (p. 120).

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ations and stepped-up Soviet propaganda attacks against the United States. Gordon would not, however, link trends in Soviet psychological-operations activities to the state of superpower relations, if by that one implies that psychological operations cannot be maintained or even intensified during periods of "détente" (pp. 2–7).

The book is divided into two parts: the first describes the principles, organization, and methods of Soviet propaganda; the second deals with the capacity of the United States to respond to Soviet propaganda, particularly in the realm of military psychological operations. The articles on Soviet psychological operations generally are less pertinent and of lower quality than those on US operations.

Part one covers such diverse topics as "The Eastern View of Security" (by Gerhard Wettig), clandestine radio (David Hertzberg), the shooting down of KAL-007 (Peter Kenez), and East German psychological operations in 1965 (Joseph Gordon), among others. Hertzberg's excellent survey of Soviet-supported clandestine radio broadcasting—examining transmissions of the National Voice of Iran, Radio Ba Yi (transmitting to China), and Our Radio/Voice of the Turkish Communist Party—has been overtaken by events, as each of these stations has ceased broadcasting in light of improved Soviet relations with the target countries.

Wettig points out the traditional Soviet effort to isolate the USSR from Western sources of information—termed instruments of "psychological warfare"—while seeking to infiltrate Western media as part of a one-sided "ideological struggle." The question arises as to why the Soviet Union has allowed greater access to Western sources of information during the Gorbachev period. Part of the answer includes the Soviets' own rationale that freer access to information facilitates technological and industrial innovation. Another part of the answer may involve the concept of "preemptive propaganda." As discovered during World War II (if not before), an effective method for maintaining morale in the face of a military defeat is to notify one's own population of the defeat and put the best face on it, exhorting the population to greater war efforts. Gorbachev may be employing such preemptive propaganda in the face of the virtual impossibility of controlling cross-border information flows in the 1980's.

The second part of the Gordon book contains good articles by Alfred Paddock, Jr., John Yurechko, and Michael Totten on the structure of United States military psychological operations and an article by John Oseth on the importance of integrating propaganda into the conduct of United States foreign policy. Unfortunately, these articles on military psychological operations fail to explain the types of operations or research conducted. Case studies of efforts in Grenada or Central America would have proven helpful in assessing United States capabilities and limitations in conducting psychological operations.[15]

In their articles, Paddock and Totten both criticize United States military psychological operations capabilities, pointing to the minuscule number of personnel on active duty, the poor condition of equipment and training, and the inadequacy of policy planning at the Office of the Secretary of Defense level and among federal agencies. In the Army, psychological operations are a subordinate and neglected component of special operations.

The best-researched article in the volume is Yurechko's analysis, apparently drawn from his dissertation, of United States military psychological operations policy in the early post–World War II period. He details the emergence of the post-war policy of containment and counteroffensive, the latter pursued through methods short of war, which included a prominent role for propaganda. As envisaged by George Kennan and others, such a counteroffensive would weaken and change the Soviet system internally—thwarting expansionism and eliminating the necessity for containment. The dual policy of containment and counteroffensive achieved wide support, but arguments over the techniques of implementation and over jurisdictional boundaries—which were partly cast as arguments over the definition of psychological warfare, psychological operations, and propaganda—prevented coherent planning and implementation.

THE BOOKS under review synthesize and build upon the many strands of previous analyses of propaganda and active measures. They effectively refute a common academic prejudice against the study of Soviet propaganda and active measures—the view that phenomena that are difficult to delimit empirically and whose effects are not easily ascertainable are not proper subjects for scholarly analysis. This prejudice—akin to that in the natural sciences regarding episodic phenomena—became current during the behavioral revolution in the social sciences, but in the post-behavioral period, interest in more traditional forms and topics of analysis has reemerged.

Much work still needs to be done in fleshing out the study of Soviet propaganda and active measures.

[15]Such case studies are found in Ron D. McLaurin, *Military Propaganda: Psychological Warfare and Operations*, New York, Praeger, 1982.

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In examining the books under review and others, it becomes apparent that there is a need for more primary research of Soviet source materials, an aspect of analysis that was somewhat understandably neglected in the pre-*glasnost'* period. Rather than focusing overmuch on the recitation of anecdotes and vignettes illustrating Soviet propaganda techniques and policy—a problem avoided by most of the authors discussed here—research should, by methodical and exhaustive combing of Soviet open sources and through historical and quantitative analysis, go beyond this focus to detailed case, institutional, and thematic analysis.[16] Also, the synthesis of materials in the West, including émigré and defector testimonies and secondary sources, can still yield new insights.[17]

In particular, there is a noticeable gap in information about the Soviet institutions that formulate and support propaganda and active measures. While some work has been done on academic institutes, the KGB, and the International Department,[18] less has appeared on the roles of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, the Main Political Administration of the Soviet Army and Navy, the Novosti news agency, Warsaw Pact organs, or the USSR Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Soviet embassies abroad. Lack of a firm case-study genre has prevented effective mapping of relationships among these institutions in the formation and execution of propaganda and active-measures policy. Still more can be done in identifying and analyzing Soviet propaganda themes over time and discerning intra-elite or institutional variations in themes.

There is also scope for greater attention to various methodological issues. We have already discussed a number of dimensions of the vexing problem of definitions. Cross-national, comparative studies are also in order. The volumes under review amply plumb the nature of Soviet deception, but largely assume or assert that it differs in quality from that practiced in other states, particularly those in the West. Yet, the comparative study of elites shows that what may be termed deception is a feature of the maintenance of elite power in any system, and diplomatic histories are replete with descriptions of deception. Granted that the Soviet Union practices military, economic, diplomatic, and other forms of deception, the question arises as to whether Soviet deception differs in quality or only in quantity from that practiced by other states. Amazingly, in examining the "challenge" of Soviet psychological operations to the United States, the Gordon volume contains no explicit comparison of US and Soviet capabilities and behavior.

The sustained effort in the analysis of propaganda and active measures during the 1970's and 1980's promises still more efforts to elucidate the institutional bases and workings of this important instrument of Soviet foreign policy. Ideally, such analysis may also contribute to the Western ability to refute and counter Soviet propaganda and active measures worldwide, or at least provide Western publics and elites with the ability to realistically assess the proposals and rhetoric of the Gorbachev period. In these respects, the volumes under review contribute to the growing recognition in the West of the broad range of policy instruments used by other states to safeguard what they regard as their national security.

[16]The standard Kremlinological methods, such as examination of biographies, obituaries, delegation visits, speeches, and articles/books about or mentioning the institutions, are envisaged here. In general, Kremlinological or historical analysis provides the foundation upon which higher-level quantitative theory-building or hypothesis-testing depends. Our basically sketchy knowledge of Soviet political institutions and processes means that we must continue to be involved in nominal categorization of political phenomena, the lowest level of generalization.

[17]Heuer mentions that there has been a large number of Soviet-bloc intelligence defections over the last 30 years, amounting to approximately 100 to 150, the majority of them Soviet citizens (Dailey and Parker, p. 22). These defectors have provided voluminous information about organizations, doctrine, and operations, some of which is in the public domain and warrants analysis.

[18]The propaganda role is usually not the primary focus of this literature, but a number of sources at least touch upon it. On academic institutes, see Oded Eran, *Mezhdunarodniki*, Ramat Gan, Israel, Turtledove Publishing, 1979. On KGB propaganda efforts, see Amy Knight, *The KGB*, Boston, Unwin Hyman, 1988, Ch. 9, pp. 277–303; John Barron, *KGB Today: The Hidden Hand*, New York, Reader's Digest Press, 1983; and Ladislav Bittman, *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation: An Insider's View*, Washington, DC, Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985 (the latter two books extensively discuss the propaganda role). On the International Department's propaganda role, see Robert Kitrinos, "International Department of the CPSU," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), September-October, 1984, pp. 61–64; and Leonard Schapiro, "The International Department of the CPSU: Key to Soviet Policy," *International Journal* (Toronto), Winter 1976–1977, pp. 41–55. A masterful study of propaganda institutions in the early Soviet period is provided by Peter Kenez, *The Birth of the Propaganda State: Soviet Methods of Mass Mobilization, 1917–1929*, Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1985.

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The Secret Police and Soviet Politics

William C. Bodie

AMY W. KNIGHT. *The KGB: Police and Politics in the Soviet Union.* Boston, Allen & Unwin, 1988.

JEREMY R. AZRAEL. *The KGB in Kremlin Politics.* Los Angeles, CA, RAND/UCLA Center for the Study of Soviet International Behavior, February 1989.

JOHN J. DZIAK. *Chekisty: A History of the KGB.* Lexington, MA, Lexington Books, 1988.

ROBERT CONQUEST. *Inside Stalin's Secret Police: NKVD Politics, 1936–39.* Stanford, CA, Hoover Institution Press, 1985.

ILYA DZHIRKVELOV. *Secret Servant: My Life with the KGB & the Soviet Elite.* New York, Harper & Row, 1987.

STANISLAV LEVCHENKO. *On the Wrong Side: My Life in the KGB.* McLean, VA, Pergamon-Brassey's, 1988.

FOR many years the Soviet secret police, in one acronymic guise or another, has been the Banquo's ghost of Western Sovietology, a disturbing apparition that could be neither explained nor ignored by analysts of Soviet politics.[1] Much more can be postulated about the KGB (*Komitet Gosudarstvennoy Bezopasnosti*—Committee for State Security) today, as is evident in the recent crop of scholarly and journalistic works on the service that is only partially represented by the volumes under review. Still, the many levels at which the KGB operates, its historic position as the most secret element of a still-shrouded political system, and the dubious reliability of many sources of information about it all invite a variety of interpretive approaches.

This essay will examine the research of four Western social scientists and historians, as well as two memoirs of former KGB officers, to appraise the state of contemporary knowledge about the Kremlin's internal security and external espionage services. Such an examination may offer some insight regarding the influence of the secret police in the Soviet political system, in terms of its influence on the policy process and of its role in succession struggles.

The conventional view that the KGB and its predecessors have been particularly difficult to assess due to the intrinsic secrecy of the subject has deterred many a scholar from pursuing an analysis of Soviet security organs. It was not so long ago that the student of Moscow's state security apparatus was far more constrained than his colleagues researching the Soviet military or economy. However restricted the primary source materials in the latter two fields, there were still sufficient Soviet publications and observable phenomena to nourish the Western researcher.

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[1] A few characteristic statements from the volumes under review suggest that most scholars have chosen to ignore that which they cannot understand: "It is a curious fact that after nearly half a century, no real examination of the role of the NKVD in the Yezhov period has been written, and only a few incomplete though useful works about the institution exist at all" (Conquest, p. 1). "Whatever the future role of the KGB (or its successor as the agency responsible for internal security), its role to date has clearly been important enough to merit much more attention than it has received from mainstream scholars" (Azrael, p. 43). "The KGB's multifarious foreign operations have drawn wide attention in the Western press and have been the subject of numerous Western studies. Yet few, if any, attempts have been made to assess the KGB's influence on the foreign policy process" (Knight, p. 278). "In the KGB's foreign role, we find a different reality with its own set of problems. . . . Here, too, the scholarly community seems to have abdicated the field in favor of a generic foreign policy analysis frequently posited on Western-derived behavioral models" (Dziak, p. xv).

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By contrast, the KGB has never published its own gazette or quarterly, and—with rare exceptions—its international operations have been conducted with professionally admirable levels of secrecy. Although the Soviets have published accounts of the tsarist secret police, Soviet historians have, in the words of Amy Knight, been "less than forthcoming about the activities of the Stalinist police" (p. 336).[2]

In the last 15 years, a spate of Soviet literature on the secret police has appeared, consisting mostly of memoir accounts and impressionistic or melodramatic treatments. Increasingly, defectors from the Soviet security organs have been willing to speak out, particularly since the publication of Arkady Shevchenko's best-selling *Breaking With Moscow*.[3] However, many of these memoir volumes, including Shevchenko's, have been criticized for factual errors as well as for a selective, even misleading, perspective on important issues regarding the KGB and Soviet politics. As a result, their offerings have been received with some reservations by Western specialists.

Major trends in Western Sovietology have also had an effect on the study of the KGB. When the accepted scholarly view holds that Soviet politics can be understood through analytic models similar to those used to study the politics of Western states, scholars tend to view the KGB as an organization that shares some commonality with Western police or espionage organizations. Thus, the fashion has been to view the KGB, at least in the post-Stalin era, as just another large, Soviet-style bureaucracy, burdened by a terrible legacy but nevertheless managed by the party in roughly the same way as other Soviet institutions. In fact, many analysts argue that because of the association of the police apparatus with the more brutal excesses of the Stalin era, the modern Communist Party of the Soviet Union has exerted special efforts to keep the KGB under firm party guidance.[4]

The volumes under review here take issue with the above perspectives to some degree, with varying levels of conviction. Regarding the data problem, the works of Jeremy Azrael and John Dziak, and especially that of Amy Knight, endorse Robert Conquest's observation regarding the availability of data on the KGB: "What is surprising is . . . how much information there is and how generally clear the picture it makes" (Conquest, p. 8). Knight, a Soviet specialist at the Library of Congress, has produced the most comprehensive survey of the history, structure, and functions of the Soviet state security organs to date. Azrael offers a remarkably detailed yet concise account of the KGB's machinations in internal Kremlin politics since the death of Stalin. Dziak recollects the founding of the modern Soviet state security apparat by Lenin and Feliks Dzerzhinsky, assembling a surprising amount of material to posit the notion that the Soviet Union is the first example of a "counterintelligence state." Conquest himself, one of the deans of Soviet studies, has pieced together from official and *samizdat* sources a wealth of data on the names and dates involved in Stalin's war against his own NKVD (People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs —Narodnyy Kommisariat Vnutrennykh Del).

With all the caveats noted above, the memoirs of those who actually participated in Soviet secret activities do serve to provide a human perspective to complement the more detached and academic offerings of Western scholars. In this regard, the volumes by Ilya Dzhirkvelov and Stanislav Levchenko tell us much about what it is like to be recruited, trained, and assigned overseas as a KGB officer.

AMY Knight's writings in this journal and elsewhere have demonstrated her considerable skill at collecting data from the Soviet press and drawing reliable conclusions from these materials.[5] In *The KGB: Police and*

[2]Even in the bibliographic field, it was not until the 1970's and 1980's that collections of works on the Cheka and its successors have been compiled. The best extant bibliography is Raymond G. Rocca and John J. Dziak, *Bibliography on Soviet Intelligence and Security Services*, Boulder, CO, Westview, 1984.

[3]New York, Ballantine, 1985. In addition to that work and the two memoirs in this essay, other recent East-bloc defector accounts include Ladislav Bittman, *The KGB and Soviet Disinformation—An Insider's View*, Elmsford, NY, Pergamon-Brassey's, 1985; Anatoliy Golitsyn, *New Lies for Old: The Communist Strategy of Deception and Disinformation*, New York, Dodd, Mead & Co., 1984; and Ion Pacepa, *Red Horizons*, Washington, DC, Regnery Gateway, 1987. For a listing of older works, see Rocca and Dziak, op. cit.

[4]Timothy Colton's analysis of Soviet politics in his *The Dilemma of Reform in the Soviet Union* (New York, Council on Foreign Relations, 1986) holds that there has been a Communist Party "consensus" to limit the role of the KGB, partially as a result of Stalinist excesses (p. 99). Jerry Hough in his *Soviet Leadership in Transition* (Washington, DC, The Brookings Institution, 1980) defines the KGB "an institution that has the functions of the CIA as well as those of internal security" (pp. 109–10).

Criticizing this type of "circumscribed" language, Jeremy Azrael notes: "In his revision of Merle Fainsod's *How Russia Is Ruled*, Hough does not even list the KGB among the Soviet political system's significant institutional actors" (p. 2). For a recent example of the view that the KGB and CIA are morally equivalent, see James Rushbridger, *The Intelligence Game*, London, Bodely Head, 1989. This view was unintentionally endorsed by (then) Vice President (and former Director of Central Intelligence) George Bush, who said to former KGB chief Yuriy Andropov upon meeting him in 1982: "I feel I already know you, since we served in similar positions" (*Time* [New York], Feb. 14, 1983, p. 30).

[5]See, for example, "The KGB and Soviet Reform," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), September-October 1988; "The Party, the KGB, and Soviet Policy-Making," *The Washington Quarterly* (Washington, DC), Spring 1988; "Victor Chebrikov and the Politics of Perestroika," Radio Free Europe-Radio Liberty, *Radio Liberty Research* (Munich), RL 252/88, June 21, 1988; and "Andropov: Myths and Realities," *Survey* (London), Spring 1984.

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Politics in the Soviet Union, Knight offers a "functional" history of the Soviet secret police, even though she proceeds from the provocative thesis that the KGB is essential to the political life of the regime and that there has been a merging of political power between the party and the political police structure that is perhaps stronger now than in the years of unregulated state terror. Although Stalin's personal dictatorship may be dead, a primary tool of his dictatorship is still required for the maintenance of party power. Knight claims that the relative abandonment of the "totalitarian model" of the 1950's by many Western scholars has sowed misunderstanding of the KGB's role in Soviet society. By thoroughly examining the Soviet and *samizdat* press, one can—she suggests—arrive at a surprisingly detailed and credible set of conclusions about the relative position of the security police within the ruling elite and the purposes to which the police are dedicated in contemporary Soviet society.

Knight begins the quest for an understanding of these matters with an account of the historical antecedents of Lenin's secret police, the Cheka, (or the VChK, for the All-Russian Extraordinary Commission To Combat Counterrevolution and Sabotage). This section is followed by a brisk institutional history, and then an extended interpretive description of the structure, functions, and prospects of the KGB in the Gorbachev era. Along the way, Knight also offers a thoughtful recapitulation of the major theoretical writings of the 1950's on the nature of police states, authoritarianism, and totalitarianism.[6]

Knight notes the long existence of the political police during the tsarist autocracy (citing the work of Marc Raeff on this history), but argues that state security institutions under the Soviet regime became qualitatively different in structure, activities, and relations with political authorities. The merging of the functions of the Cheka and NKVD in 1934 was, she argues, a key step in creating what was to become a colossal power player in Soviet life.

Although Knight does not dwell too much on the Stalinist NKVD or its role in the sanguinary revolution implemented from above by the *vozhd'*, she does suggest that Stalin had to walk a precarious tightrope, bolstering the prestige of the police *apparat* with which he waged war on both Soviet society and the communist political and military elite, while keeping the police from turning on him. He did this by shrewdly turning factions and individuals against each other; his efforts culminated in an attempt to characterize the 1936–38 period as the product of unscrupulous criminals who "wormed their way" into the NKVD. With the ascent of Lavrentiy Beria, the NKVD took on an additional role as an intriguer in Politburo affairs (a dangerous process, it turned out, for Beria would likely have been on the next purge list when Stalin died in March 1953, and he was soon arrested and executed by Stalin's successors).

The core concern of this volume is the institutional development, in the post-Stalin period, of the KGB from a primarily coercive body into a manipulative one with respect to party politics and societal control. Knight has gathered a mass of functional information on the individuals, committees, and administrative organs of the KGB. Based on this data, she suggests that the KGB's source of power in the modern Soviet state flows from its role as purveyor of information on the party *apparat* to party leaders.

The authority and prestige of the KGB appeared to decline under Stalin's old henchman Nikita Khrushchev, but then rebounded to such an extent under Leonid Brezhnev that a KGB chief (Yuriy Andropov) could be considered for and obtain the number one party post. According to Knight, Mikhail Gorbachev initially utilized the state security apparatus just as Andropov used it, that is, as a leading wedge in a drive to root out corruption in the party and state leadership. Since late 1986, however, as Gorbachev moved on from his initial emphasis on social discipline to other prescriptions for the ailing Soviet society, the KGB has, in Knight's estimation, lost some of its domestic political clout.[7]

The author sees the KGB increasingly confined to foreign activities, at which, she adds, it has become quite skilled (p. 299). Although the KGB's input into Soviet strategy is not the focus of Knight's book, she reinforces a theme found in defector and Western works when she notes the increasing role of active measures, diplomatic initiatives, and propaganda in Soviet foreign policy. Knight traces an increase in KGB involvement in Soviet foreign policy decision-making in the late 1960's through the 1970's, particularly with respect to the 1968 invasion of Czechoslovakia and the Yom Kippur War of 1973, but notes that "since Brezhnev's death, Andropov's KGB successors have not

[6]Her discussion of the works of Carl Friedrich and Zbigniew Brzezinski, and Hannah Arendt, as well as their later "revisionist" critics, is particularly apt.

[7]In the chapter on internal dissent, Knight offers a fine analysis of the work of Robert Sharlet and Peter Reddaway, particularly Sharlet's "Legal Policy under Khrushchev and Brezhnev: Continuity and Change," in Donald Barry, et al., Eds., *Soviet Law After Stalin: Part II*, The Hague, Sijthoff and Noordhof, 1978; and Reddaway, "Policy towards Dissent since Khrushchev," in T. H. Rigby, et al., Eds., *Authority, Power and Policy in the USSR: Essays Dedicated to Leonard Schapiro*, New York, St. Martin's Press, 1980.

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faced foreign policy crises" (p. 296).

Knight posits that the "tactical flexibility and pragmatism" of Soviet policy under Gorbachev will enhance the position of the KGB as a provider of information and executor of policy. In this connection, she mentions "Andropov's protégés who remain in the KGB, V. A. Kryuchkov in particular" (p. 299). The elevation of Kryuchkov directly to full Politburo membership in September 1989 seems to support this judgment. His previous position as head of the KGB's First Chief Directorate, charged with overseas operations, is perhaps an indication that such activities may be highlighted under his stewardship.

WHEREAS Knight suggests a rhythmic pattern of KGB influence on Communist Party affairs, Jeremy Azrael, in his brisk but concentrated monograph *The KGB in Kremlin Politics,* argues that the Soviet secret police has been a consistent, independent interest group intimately involved in Kremlin politics since the death of Stalin. Azrael has made a careful study of Soviet publications and statements in order to test what he calls "the mainstream interpretation of modern Soviet history," the view that in the post-Stalin period, the secret police has undergone "complete and permanent emasculation as a power-political actor" (p. 1).[8] The interesting element here is that he utilizes the same tools as all "Kremlinological studies," sifting what he believes are valid data from the abundant misinformation and disinformation. The result is a refreshing, well-documented exposition of the view that we have severely underestimated the political potency of the security police.

From Ivan Serov, the first head of the newly named KGB in 1954, to Vladimir Kryuchkov, the current chairman, KGB chiefs have, Azrael notes, been a persistent presence in and around Soviet leadership struggles. Relying primarily on the memoirs of Khrushchev, Sergo Mikoyan, and Yuriy Krotkov, and the work of the Medvedev brothers,[9] Azrael places Serov at the center of the Khrushchev group that arrested Beria, purged the "anti-party group" (Georgiy Malenkov, Vyacheslav Molotov, and Lazar Kaganovich), and eventually disposed of Marshal Georgiy Zhukov. Azrael endorses the views of defectors Oleg Penkovskiy and Ilya Dzirkvelov, even citing Dzirkvelov's claim that as a Georgian KGB official, he had seen an order from Serov to republic KGB heads to support Khrushchev in the 1957 Central Committee showdown.

Azrael notes that Serov was also well-suited for the eventual removal of Zhukov for "Bonapartist" tendencies, as "Serov had spent much of his career monitoring the political activities of the high command on Stalin's behalf and had reportedly been personally involved in the arrest of Marshal [Mikhail] Tukhachevsky during the Great Purge" (p. 11). Serov also knew, according to Penkovskiy, that Zhukov was pushing for Marshal Ivan Konev as Serov's replacement, knowledge that Serov could easily have used against Zhukov. In presenting this evidence, Azrael takes direct issue with the view of Timothy Colton that the KGB had nothing to do with the Zhukov affair.[10]

Moving on to Serov's demotion to the post of chief of military intelligence (*Gosudarstvennoye Razvedyvatel'noye Upravleniye*—GRU) and the reign of Aleksandr Shelepin as KGB chairman from 1958 until 1961 (and thereafter as de facto chief, working through his protégé Vladimir Semichastnyy), Azrael argues that "everyone who has studied the matter agrees that Shelepin and his KGB acolytes" joined Brezhnev, Aleksey Kosygin, and Nikolay Podgornyy in the October 1964 overthrow of Khrushchev. As evidence, he points to Shelepin's promotion to the party Presidium (Politburo) and Semichastnyy's promotion to Central Committee membership in November 1964 (p. 16). However, if Azrael's interpretation is correct, then how does he explain the subsequent dismissal of Semichastny and the "neutering" of Shelepin in 1967? Would an intriguer who had mobilized his entire power base in previous political struggles sit still while his own powers were being stripped, merely because he "recalled the experience of Beria" (p. 19)?

Of particular interest is the author's treatment of the "1967 settlement" in which Yuriy Andropov, the protégé of Mikhail Suslov, became head of the KGB, with Brezhnev crony Semen Tsvigun appointed as deputy chairman. In his discussion, Azrael takes issue with those Western specialists who suggest a "mature" Soviet political system with a stable, pliable political police. Azrael sees signs of "high-stake negotiations" behind the scenes, a "temporary settlement," and a "delicate balance of underlying power" (p. 20). He notes Andropov's 15-year tenure at

[8]Azrael focuses in particular on selected works by George Breslauer, Seweryn Bialer, Timothy Colton, and Jerry Hough, viz: George W. Breslauer, *Khrushchev and Brezhnev as Leaders: Building Authority in Soviet Politics,* Boston, Allen and Unwin, 1982; Seweryn Bialer, *Soviet Paradox: External Expansion, Internal Decline,* New York, Alfred A. Knopf, 1986; Timothy J. Colton, *Commissars, Commanders, and Civilian Authority,* Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1979; idem, *The Dilemma of Reform in the Soviet Union;* Jerry Hough, "Gorbachev's Strategy," *Foreign Affairs* (New York), Fall 1985; idem (with Merle Fainsod), *How the Soviet Union is Governed,* Cambridge, MA, Harvard University Press, 1979; and idem, *Russia and the West,* New York, Simon and Schuster, 1988.

[9]See Strobe Talbott, Ed., *Khrushchev Remembers,* Boston, Little, Brown, and Company, 1970; Sergo Mikoyan, "Confession and Atonement," *Sovetskaya Kul'tura* (Moscow), Aug. 18, 1988; Yuriy Krotkov, "The End of Marshal Beria," *Novyy Zhurnal* (Moscow), No. 133, 1978; and Roy A. Medvedev and Zhores A. Medvedev, *Khrushchev: The Years in Power,* New York, Columbia University Press, 1976.

[10]See Colton, *Commissars, Commanders, and Civilian Authority,* p. 195.

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the KGB as one in which the security chief successively involved himself in the purges of Brezhnev enemies such as Petro Shelest, grew closer to Brezhnev after gaining a Politburo seat, and began to use his position as KGB chairman to gain the general secretaryship in the Brezhnev succession struggle. Azrael cites evidence of deals and compromises, pointing to the significance of various personnel transfers, speeches, and obituary signatures that have apparently eluded colleagues such as Colton and Seweryn Bialer. As for the current regime, Azrael believes the KGB to be once more a kingmaker and power broker. It was, he argues, responsible for Gorbachev's rise and participated in the September 1988 deal that made Chebrikov a potential candidate for general secretary at the expense of Yegor Ligachev.

In discussing the post–Brezhnev era, Azrael disagrees with Knight on several points. Knight argues that the 1982 appointment of Vitaliy Fedorchuk, a career "Chekist," to take over as KGB chief was a disturbing sign for the Brezhnevites, who were concerned about an anti-corruption drive being used to get rid of them. Azrael, on the other hand, suggests that Fedorchuk was appointed at Brezhnev's insistence, and that, "[h]ad Brezhnev been in better health and lived longer, he might well have tried to capitalize on Fedorchuk's appointment and utilize the KGB as a sword against Andropov, as well as a shield" (p. 29). The fact that Fedorchuk was removed after Andropov became general secretary would seem to bolster the latter interpretation.

Azrael is also convinced that Chebrikov, as KGB chief, helped Konstantin Chernenko in his leadership bid after the death of Andropov. Finally, Azrael writes that "[i]f anything, Chebrikov's backing was an even more important factor in Gorbachev's selection to succeed Chernenko than in Chernenko's to succeed Andropov" (p. vi). By contrast, Knight sees the old patronage network of Andrey Kirilenko as the key to Gorbachev's rise, as it was for Andropov before him (pp. 91, 96).

Azrael's recounting of the events surrounding the September 1988 party plenum, in which several presumed Gorbachev foes were removed or downgraded, deserves some mention. He indicates that Chebrikov was becoming alienated by Gorbachev's increasingly radical departures from the 1985–86 stress on discipline, and offers as evidence attacks on *glasnost'* exemplified in the famous "Nina Andreyeva" letter in *Sovetskaya Rossiya*.[11] Azrael presents the most thorough discussion to date of Fedor Burlatskiy's article in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* on September 22, 1988, an article that ostensibly detailed the anti-Khrushchev coup in 1964, but was taken by many as a warning about a similar anti-Gorbachev coup.

The author suggests that the results of the September 1988 plenum actually strengthened the KGB, with Chebrikov supporting Gorbachev's moves with respect to Ligachev and others, and with Gorbachev forced to make "a Hobson's choice . . . [that] paved the way for Chebrikov's emergence as a candidate for supreme power in his own right" (p. 42). Chebrikov's sudden removal from his posts in October 1989 proved this forecast wrong, but Gorbachev's political improvisation has left the institutional strength of the KGB relatively unscathed in comparison to that of the party or the armed forces.

The combined impact of the Knight and Azrael volumes is to provide a needed corrective to those in the Sovietological community who have consistently downplayed the role of the security police in Kremlin politics. After reading the analyses of these two authors, it is difficult to argue that the KGB has been anything but a major political player in recent years.

IF, as *Pravda* declared on January 28, 1988, "History is a sphere of acute ideological struggle,"[12] then the very enterprise of studying the Soviet past, let alone the history of the secret police tradition, is a daunting task. John Dziak, a Defense Intelligence Agency analyst whose previous publications on Soviet military affairs have been impressive,[13] delivers a "selective and concise inquiry" into the history of Soviet state security that by and large clarifies many issues surrounding the origins of the KGB.

Dziak has compiled a detailed set of appendices containing organizational charts of the Cheka, the

[11]On March 13, 1988, the Moscow newspaper *Sovetskaya Rossiya* published a full-page "letter" entitled "I Cannot Forsake Principles" by Nina Andreyeva, a Leningrad schoolteacher who claimed that some elements of *glasnost'* confused her students. Andreyeva offered a robust defense of Stalin, whose reputation, she claimed, was unfairly besmirched by "the remnants of defeated classes within the USSR, including NEP-men, basmachi, and kulaks, as well as the spiritual successors of people such as Martov, Trotsky, Yagoda, to discredit industrialization, collectivization, and the cultural revolution, which took our country into the ranks of the great world powers." A strong response was published after a brief interval in *Pravda*, suggesting that Andreyeva and her critics were proxies for higher-level political patrons. For a discussion of the affair and its impact on recent Soviet politics, see Michel Tatu, "19th Party Conference," *Problems of Communism* (Washington, DC), May-August 1988, pp. 1–3.

[12]Quoted in Jiri Hochman, "The Soviet Historical Debate," *Orbis* (Philadelphia), Summer 1988, p. 369.

[13]See, for example, John J. Dziak, "Soviet Intelligence and Security Services in the Eighties: The Paramilitary Dimension," ibid., Winter 1981, pp. 771–86; *Soviet Perceptions of Military Doctrine and Military Power: The Interaction of Theory and Practice*, New York, Crane Russak, 1981; and "The Soviet Approach to Special Operations," in Frank R. Barnett, B. Hugh Tover, and Richard H. Shultz, Eds., *Special Operations in US Strategy*, Washington, DC, National Defense University Press, 1984, pp. 97–120.

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KGB, and the many bureaucratic variants that appeared in between. Although he also provides a list of leaders, defectors, and political prisoners, he is less concerned with the standard social science "systems" approach to explaining the KGB than he is with providing detailed summaries of the events and personalities that give a flavor of the institution. His rich portrayal of Soviet espionage, counterintelligence, "wet affairs" (assassinations and sabotage), and active-measures operations from the Bolshevik Revolution through the end of World War II is far more engrossing, but no less authoritative, than the organizational approach taken by Amy Knight and others. However, his treatment of the post-Stalin KGB is more sketchy and impressionistic than Knight's, and his conclusions on Gorbachev may appear timid in light of recent events.

The author admits up front that his work is not a comprehensive survey of the organization and activities of the Soviet secret police. Rather, he has attempted to demonstrate his thesis that the Soviet Union is the first historical example of a "counterintelligence state." By this he means that the regime, "annealed and perpetuated in conspiracy," has an overarching concern with enemies, the result being that the state security services end up driving the political system they purport to serve. Since intrigues and plots were intrinsic to the emergence of the Bolsheviks and to the success of their coup, and since the subsequent record of the regime is crammed with state terror and deception, the Chekist legacy has, he argues, left an indelible imprint on Soviet political culture.

A sub-theme of his analysis holds that "an unbroken patrimony between tsarist repression and Soviet terror cannot be claimed" (p. 31). Dziak argues that the tsarist police—the Okhrana—was an inept and far more "liberal" institution than that which was forged under Lenin and Dzerzhinskiy. The relatively lenient treatment meted out by the Okhrana to Lenin and other Bolshevik leaders in exile, its fumbling attempts at infiltrating revolutionary organizations, and its answerability in principle to a court system, all set it apart qualitatively from the Cheka.[14] Indeed, Dziak convincingly argues that the KGB more closely resembles the Oprichnina, Ivan the Terrible's bodyguard cum secret police, than it does the Romanov dynasty's security service.

Leonard Schapiro once wrote that the Cheka "came into existence in response to the conditions that arise when a minority is determined to rule alone."[15] Dziak focuses on two events—the suppression of the Kronstadt Uprising in 1921 and the Trust operation designed by Dzerzhinskiy to entrap and eliminate an external Russian opposition to Bolshevik rule—as emblematic of the terror and deception at the heart of the Soviet regime. The account of these and other cases serves to demonstrate that the use of extreme terror and extralegal entrapment as instruments of state policy did not start with Stalin, but, as Aleksandr Solzhenitsyn has argued, began at the beginning.

The most fascinating passage in this book, for this reader, was the discussion of Dzerzhinskiy's extraordinary interview with the Moscow correspondent of Maxim Gorky's *Novaya Zhizn'*, in which "Iron Feliks" is quite candid about the breadth of terror and the efficiency with which the Chekists carried it out. This account is especially noteworthy in the context of later Soviet attempts to pin the blame for all things wrong with the secret police on Genrikh Yagoda, Nikolay Yezhov, Beria, and later, Stalin.[16]

Dziak's workmanlike description of Stalin's overhaul of the security police for his own purposes, and of counterintelligence and espionage operations during World War II is perhaps not as extensive as other accounts. What is new here is Dziak's view that despite the tremendous turnover in the security police as a result of the purges and the war, the Soviet leadership's fixation on external and internal enemies, and the concomitant perception of a need for a vigilant security force to deal with them, has remained constant from Lenin through Gorbachev.[17]

In his zeal for thematic consistency Dziak gets carried away at times, as when he attempts to portray the NEP (New Economic Policy) of the mid-1920's as an adjunct to the Trust operation, saying that "the NEP itself served a deception purpose in that it helped to refinance

[14]In Appendix A, Dziak compares official figures on deaths from executions, pogroms, and prison confinement in the years 1862–1917 (25,000) with Cheka tribunal executions in the years 1917–23 (200,000). Comparable differences were found for numbers of political and other prisoners for the same two periods.

[15]Schapiro, *The Russian Revolutions of 1917*, New York, Basic Books, 1984, p.185, quoted in Dziak, p. 21.

[16]Dziak points to *V. I. Lenin i VChK: Sbornik dokumentov (1917–1922 gg.)* (V. I. Lenin and the VChK: Collected Documents [1917–22]), Moscow, Politizdat, 1975. This volume, prepared under the editorial chairmanship of Semen Tsvigun, stands as the most prominent attempt to glorify the Lenin-Dzerzhinskiy era, placing the blame on Stalin for the great terror of that period.

[17]Knight endorses this point in her discussion of Chebrikov's harsh speech at the 27th Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union in March 1986 and other KGB propaganda: "The principal message of speeches and articles by KGB representatives is that the USSR is threatened by large-scale efforts by Western intelligence agencies to penetrate the Soviet Union by sending spies through channels of cultural, scientific, and tourist exchange and by provocations against Soviet citizens at home and abroad. In addition, Soviet citizens are said to be barraged by hostile propaganda from the West as part of an effort to undermine the Soviet system" (pp. 205–06).

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Soviet industry at Western political and economic expense" (pp. 49–50). It is something of an exaggeration to imply that because Dzerzhinskiy held the post of chief of the Supreme Council of the National Economy, the NEP was itself a fiction, to be eliminated when it had served its deception purpose. If so, it would have been in Moscow's interest to keep the NEP going for a few more years to gain greater financial investment from the West.

ROBERT CONQUEST confines himself to a very tightly delimited subject in his work *Inside Stalin's Secret Police*: the documentation of the movement, promotion, death, and disappearance of thousands of individuals in the NKVD between 1936 and 1939, a period in which "Stalin established his total control, and destroyed the old cadres of the state, the Party and the army—a 'revolution from above' in many ways as complete as has ever been carried out" (p. 2).[18] Conquest has combed official party records of awards, announcements, and obituaries, as well as samizdat records to provide a view of NKVD politics from the rise of Yagoda until the Katyn forest massacre in 1940.

This masterly archival feat is performed without much fanfare or analysis, but until the Soviets themselves begin to open some of their archives on this topic, Conquest's book will provide grist for a generation of scholars. A must for the specialist, this volume is considerably less accessible to the general reader than Conquest's earlier work on the purges, *The Great Terror*.[19]

THE two defector accounts under review are among the latest of a growing crop of memoirs pioneered by Walter Krivitsky and the papers of Oleg Penkovskiy.[20] Ilya Dzhirkvelov had a long and varied career with Soviet intelligence, from guarding the Livadia Palace during the Yalta Conference in 1945 until he defected in 1980 from his cover as an official at the World Health Organization in Geneva. Stanislav Levchenko, who worked as a propagandist in organizations such as the Soviet Peace Committee, had a briefer KGB career, from 1971 until 1979, when he defected from his cover post as a TASS reporter in Japan. Whatever the scholarly shortcomings of these two memoirs—documentation is scarce, and the tone of each is romantic and occasionally novelistic—they do help flesh out our understanding of the lives of Soviet intelligence operatives working under cover in the Western world, and provide a working-level equivalent of Arkady Shevchenko's account of the life he led as a high-ranking Soviet official at the United Nations. Both books provide in-depth accounts of the authors' recruitment and training, as well as memorable reports of their wrenching and dramatic decisions to defect.

Dzhirkvelov mentions in his preface that he was not really a dissident, but rather a faithful servant of the regime, who became disillusioned as a result of the way he was treated during the Brezhnev years. Although he notes that he seeks to explain, not expose, the Soviet regime, his account is full of strong value judgments, rendered in emotional language. He writes that aspects of Soviet politics resembled "a comedy, when history can be reshaped at the will of a single individual; but a nation gets the government it deserves" (p. 115).

Dzhirkvelov offers "verbatim" accounts of discussions and lectures, some up to a half-page long, from as long as 40 years ago. Nowhere is there any qualifying language to explain his taking such liberties (a practice also indulged in, to a lesser degree, by Levchenko). In an evident effort to settle scores with a variety of personages, from Serov to other case officers, the author offers a sensationalistic recollection of drinking bouts and orgies within what is generally considered by outside analysts to be a professional, elite corps.

Levchenko was a press officer who was recruited into the KGB after serving in a variety of posts in the 1960's with the Soviet global agitprop bureaucracy. His account of his training and of the ways in which his cover job at the Tokyo bureau of TASS was set up are fascinating. He claims to have been able to provide Moscow with a great deal of information about internal Japanese politics. At times, his memoir is a bit sloppy and sentimental and overly eager to show that his defection was not just a decision undertaken for personal reasons but was a political statement, the result of his growing conviction that the Soviet system itself was "on the wrong side." On the other hand, his description of his bumpy adaptation to life in the United States—the most poignant part of the book—is effectively understated.[21]

HOW will the secret police fare in the current period of systemic crisis, in which previously sacrosanct personages and institutions are being stripped of legitimacy? The KGB is certainly one of the most de-

[18]Dziak observes (p. 60) that in the period from the appointment of Genrikh Yagoda as secret police chief in July 1934, through the reign of Nikolay Yezhov, to the emergence of Beria, more than half the delegates to the (17th) Party Congress (in 1934) were imprisoned or executed.

[19]New York, Macmillan, 1973, rev. ed.

[20]Walter Krivitsky, *In Stalin's Secret Service*, Frederick, MD, University Press of America Reprint, 1985; and Oleg Penkovskiy, *The Penkovskiy Papers*, New York, Doubleday, 1965, translated by Peter Deriabin, with an introduction and commentary by Frank Gibney.

[21](Footnote 21 is on p. 108.)

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spised bodies in the USSR, and there must be those on Dzerzhinsky Square who are appalled at the breakdown of many, if not all, methods of social control. At the same time, the KGB has not been subject to the same officially sanctioned criticisms as other pillars of pre-Gorbachev Soviet power.

As the best-educated, most sophisticated group in the ruling elite, intelligence authorities are obviously aware of the need for socio-economic overhaul in order to give Moscow a chance to remain a major power in the information age. It is therefore arguable that the Soviet intelligence establishment is an accomplice in the Gorbachev revolution, if not its inspiration. If this is the case, then those in the West concerned with Soviet affairs have a greater responsibility than ever to educate themselves about the KGB. The reviewed books will be useful in this overdue effort.

[21]An interesting coda to the Levchenko book describes the author's initial treatment in the United States, including an incident when the State Department made him meet with Soviet officials at the State Department building. He also recounts KGB attempts to use his family in the Soviet Union to convince him to return.

Levchenko includes as an appendix a "primer on the USSR and the KGB." This is basically a question-and-answer session that elaborates on a published interview he had with two American scholars on Soviet disinformation in 1983. See Richard H. Shultz and Roy Godson, *Dezinformatsia: Active Measures in Soviet Strategy*, Elmsford, NY, Pergamon-Brassey's, 1984.

CORRECTION

In the November-December 1989 issue, p. 1, the American sponsorship of the Soviet-American conferences was incorrectly identified. It should have been given as the International Research & Exchanges Board (IREX) with funds provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York and the John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation.

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